

THE TRANSLATION  
OF RELICS IVORY, TRIER

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THE ivory plaque depicting a Translation of Relics, in the Cathedral Treasury at Trier, is one of the enigmas of Early Byzantine art (fig. 1). Specific though it is in its portrayal of setting and participants, the identity of the event has not yet been satisfactorily determined. Imperial couples from Constantine and Helena to Justinian II and Theodora, spanning more than 350 years, have been proposed as the protagonists; the date and provenance of the ivory have been equally elusive to modern scholarship. Although current opinion favors a sixth-century date and a Constantinopolitan locale for the event and a sixth-century Constantinopolitan provenance for the ivory, Egypt has been suggested more than once as the place of origin. Typical of the reactions to the ivory is that of Beckwith: "The scene remains an enigma, the style is baffling, but Volbach is probably correct in settling for Constantinople in the sixth century."<sup>1</sup> In this study I hope to demonstrate that such apparently safe remarks about the ivory are incorrect; the scene can be determined, the style identified, and the date and place of origin shown to be other than Constantinople or even Egypt in the sixth century.

Acquired by the Trier Cathedral in 1844, the ivory is in very good condition. Only its upper right corner, small pieces along the left edge, and the heads of some secondary figures are missing. It measures  $13.1 \times 26.1 \times 2.3$  cm. and has been cut to a depth of 2 cm.<sup>2</sup> The translation takes place against a precisely noted architectural background. At the left, rising on an elevation obscured by the cart, is a two-storied building, each story flanked by columns. The lower story of the façade is pierced by three windows; in a lunette in the upper story a bust of a cruciform-nimbed, short-bearded Christ appears. Arched openings are visible on the sides of the building. The second structure, occupying more than three-quarters of the width of the plaque, is three-storied and inhabited by spectators. Where it abuts the first structure its horizontals recede into the depth of the relief, suggesting a hemicyclical plan. Its first story is comprised of piers from which arches spring; circular ornaments fill the spandrels. On the second story columns carry an entablature, and in the rectangular openings of the wall behind the columns half-length figures appear swinging censers in their right hands and gesturing plaintively with their left hands. The uppermost story presents a miniature arcuated colonnade before which a series of busts is set. The translation procession

<sup>1</sup> For a summary of the scholarship on the ivory, see J. Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (Harmondsworth, 1970) (hereafter Beckwith, *E.C. and Byz. Art*), 172 (note 8 to p. 41), pl. 74; W. F. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, 2nd ed., Römisch-germanisches Zentralmuseum zu Mainz, Katalog VII (Mainz, 1952) (hereafter Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*), 70f., no. 143, pl. 45.

<sup>2</sup> On the history of the ivory, see R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, I (Berlin, 1927–29), 269; N. Irsch, *Der Dom zu Trier* (Düsseldorf, 1931), 319–23. For a detailed description of the ivory, including its physical condition, cf. Delbrueck, *op. cit.*, 261–67. For illustrations, see H. Schnitzler, *Rheinische Schatzkammer*, I (Düsseldorf [1957]), pls. 1–5.

moves from left to right led by a figure in Byzantine imperial garb. The emperor wears a short tunic marked with pellets, a long chlamys fastened by a fibula, and a diadem with short double pendilia; he carries a large lit candle. Accompanying him are seventeen figures, some in tunic and chlamys, others in tunic and paenula, who cluster around and behind, three deep. Three in the front row with the emperor carry lit candles. Following them are two plump, short-legged horses drawing a cart, upon which sit a driver and, above and behind on a sausage-shaped cushion, two ecclesiastics in bishops' vestments who hold a reliquary on their knees. The side of the cart bears a sculpted relief of three small togate figures. The procession is met by an empress, a short woman in a pearl-bordered chlamys and long-sleeved dalmatic. Wearing a crown bordered in pearls with softened pyramidal projections and shoulder-length pendilia, she holds a long cross staff in her left hand and reaches out with her right arm toward the emperor. Behind her is a basilical church with three men working on its roof. A fourth figure maintains a precarious perch on the flank of the basilica between a small two-storied, rotunda-like building and a two-storied, pitched-roof structure. Crosses are affixed to the two peaks of the basilica's roof.

Attempts to identify the subject of the ivory have been based primarily on iconographical features. Delbrueck argued in behalf of a late seventh-century date on the basis of hairstyle, the absence of a particular fibula form, the short tunic of the emperor, his beardlessness, and the type of Christ in relation to the coinage of Justinian II.<sup>3</sup> His arguments are, however, quite weak, as Wessel has shown, and need not be repeated.<sup>4</sup> The participation of two high ecclesiastics has encouraged scholars to seek instances in which two patriarchs figured in the translation of relics to a new church in Constantinople. Thus, the ivory has been linked with the translation of the girdle of the Virgin in 464 to the church of the Theotokos in Chalkoprateia, with Patriarchs Gennadius of Constantinople and Martyrios of Antioch; and, more often, with the translation of relics of the Forty Martyrs from Hagia Sophia to Hagia Eirene at Sycae, with Menas of Constantinople and Apollinaris of Alexandria in 552.<sup>5</sup> The translation of the relics of Joseph and Zacchariah to Hagia Sophia II in 415 by Patriarch Atticus of Constantinople and Moses, bishop of Antardus in Phoenicia, with the Exarch Ursus and Pulcheria at the head of the procession, has also been proposed.<sup>6</sup> One architectural historian, who did not

<sup>3</sup> Delbrueck, *op. cit.*, 267–69.

<sup>4</sup> K. Wessel, "Studien zur oströmischen Elfenbeinskulpturen," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Greifswald*, 3 (1953–54), 12–15.

<sup>5</sup> V. Grumel proposed the translation to the church of the Theotokos in Chalkoprateia: "A Propos de la plaque d'ivoire du Trésor de Trèves," *REB*, 12 (1954), 187–90. J. Strykowski first hypothesized the translation of the relics of the Forty Martyrs: *Orient oder Rom* (Leipzig, 1901), 85–89; his followers include A. Grabar, *Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, II (Paris, 1946), 352f. and note 4; and Wessel, *op. cit.*, 14. Both translations are described by Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, I (Leipzig, 1883), 113, 228.

<sup>6</sup> S. Pelekanidis, "Date et interprétation de la plaque en ivoire de Trèves," *AIPHOS*, 12 (1952), 361–71; this hypothesis is based on a passage in the *Chronicon Paschale*, ed. L. Dindorf, Bonn ed. (1832), I, 572f.



attempt to identify the event, believed the Chalke and a colonnaded court ("salone ipetrale") of the Great Palace were represented in the background.<sup>7</sup> This view was dismissed by another scholar, who doubts the Chalke is represented and who believes the larger structure in the background is the interior of a basilical church "in flattened-out perspective."<sup>8</sup> The curvature of the three-storied building would seem to suggest a hippodrome or coliseum; alas, the church bordering the hippodrome in Constantinople, Hagia Euphemia, was octagonal in plan.<sup>9</sup> Other Constantinopolitan basilical churches with flanking chapels of the Early Byzantine period could surely be considered as the "model" for the church on the Trier ivory, so common was the type.<sup>10</sup> Hence, in order to determine the identity of the translation, aspects other than the number of ecclesiastics or the architectural background must be explored.

Some iconographical details, heretofore ignored, offer significant evidence in the dating of the ivory. To begin, the emperor's headdress is comprised of a plain diadem with half-roundels suspended from it and, above it, five short, scallop-like projections increasing in size toward the center. Short double pendilia hang from the diadem. I have not been able to find anything comparable to this type of headdress. It is quite distinct from a type popular in the sixth century with three slender plume-like forms rising from the diadem, which is worn along with a helmet, the latter often plumed. Anastasius, Justinian, Justin II, and Maurice wear such a crown on their coinage, on the control stamps of silver objects, and in portraits on ivories and silver (figs. 2, 10, 12).<sup>11</sup> Compared to the stability of crown forms throughout most of the sixth century, the last decades of the sixth century and the seventh century were a period of changing fashions. In the coinage of Tiberius II and Maurice a cross or raised circular ornament rises above the diadem (figs. 3, 4); the raised circular ornament is often surmounted by a cross or combined with

<sup>7</sup> E. Dyggve, *Ravennatum Sacrum Palatium* (Copenhagen, 1941), 12-14.

<sup>8</sup> C. Mango, *The Brazen House. A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen, 1959), 104f.

<sup>9</sup> R. Naumann and H. Belting, *Die Euphemia-Kirche am Hippodrom zu Istanbul und ihre Fresken*, *IstForsch*, XXV (Berlin, 1966).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 107f., with further references.

<sup>11</sup> For examples of Anastasius and Justinian on ivories, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 26-28, 31f., 38, nos. 15-21, 33, 51f.; for a portrait of Justin II on a silver object, the Cross of Justin II, see fig. 10, and W. F. Volbach and J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz und der christliche Osten*, *Propyläen Kunstgeschichte*, III (Berlin, 1968) (hereafter Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*), pl. 69; for Anastasius, Justinian, and Justin II on silver control stamps, see E. C. Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, DOS, VII (Washington, D.C., 1961) (hereafter Dodd, *Stamps*), nos. 2, 4-6, 8, 13f., 16, 20-22, 25, and table I; for examples on coins, see A. R. Bellinger, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, I (Washington, D.C., 1966) (hereafter Bellinger, *D.O. Coins*, I): Anastasius, nos. 2, 3, 6, 27, pls. I, V (most often, Anastasius wears a diadem with cross; see pls. II-VI); Justin and Justinian, nos. 1-7, pl. XII; Justinian, trefoil ornament on crown worn extensively but not exclusively, pls. XIII-XLVIII; Justin II, nos. 1-8, 138, 147, 190, 191, 195.2, 197, 210, and discernible on coins in which Justin II appears with Sophia, nos. 97c.1, 99a, 99b.1, 100d.3, 102a.2, 107.1, 123, 125a.1, 126a, 152c.1, 153, 156.1, 157, 159, 166, 170.1, 175.3, 176, 179a.2, 182.3, pls. XLIX-LIX; Tiberius, a rare example, no. 61c.2, pl. LXV; Maurice, nos. 2a, 152b.2, 153.1, 155.1, 156.1, 158c, 164c.1, 175.1, 180, pls. LXVI, LXXIVf. See also G. Zacos and A. Vegliery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I, pt. 1 (Basel, 1972), 9, no. 6, a seal on which Tiberius II wears a diadem with a trefoil ornament. See also the three-plumed crown worn by Pharaoh in the Vienna Genesis, in Beckwith, *E.C. and Byz. Art*, pl. 107.

the trefoil.<sup>12</sup> On silver control stamps Heraclius wears crowns with and without pendilia, with raised circular ornaments, sometimes surmounted by a cross, or, in an archaizing mood, with the three projections.<sup>13</sup> The coin portraits of Heraclius present even more variety.<sup>14</sup> Thus, on the evidence of the crown worn by the emperor on the Trier ivory, it is not possible to affirm the commonly held sixth-century date; rather, on the basis of the evolution of the imperial crown in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, the possibility that the emperor on the ivory may be Tiberius, Maurice, Phocas, or even Heraclius should be considered.

The emperor wears a fibula comprised of a round brooch from which two tear-shaped gems are suspended. This, too, is anomalous. In the Early Byzantine period imperial fibulae were comprised of circular brooches with three chains or beaded wires ending in large pearls, as, for example, Theodosius and his corulers on the silver missorium in Madrid (fig. 8), Justinian in S. Vitale, and Justinian on a gold medallion once in Paris (fig. 9).<sup>15</sup> Two pendant fibulae are found on some seventh-century gold solidi worn, for example, by Heraclius Constantine on two issues of his father, dated 616–26,

<sup>12</sup> For earlier examples of the crown with raised circular ornament: a coin of Anastasius, in Bellinger, *D.O. Coins*, I, no. 6, pl. 1; and on the Barberini diptych (fig. 13), in Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 36, no. 48. The profile portrait of Anastasius wearing a diadem with a cross was common; cf. Bellinger, *op. cit.*, pls. I–VI, and no. 4, pl. 1, an exceptional bust representation of this headdress.

The crown with the raised circular ornament may have been reintroduced by Justin II based on the evidence of control stamps on a recently discovered silver cup, in the Abegg-Stiftung in Bern, which E. C. Dodd places in "a transitional period close to the reign of Justin II but actually in the short reign of Tiberius. . ."; cf. "Byzantine Silver Stamps: Supplement II," *DOP*, 22 (1968), 144, no. 27.1. The author would like to see this type on the round stamp on the Stuma paten (*Stamps*, no. 27), but I doubt it. For examples on the silver stamps of Tiberius and Maurice, see *ibid.*, nos. 28, 30f.; see also "Supplement II," 145f., nos. 31.1, 31.2. For the crown with raised circular ornament on coins, see Bellinger, *op. cit.*: Maurice, nos. 5–8, 30b.2, 30e.1, 51a.2, 54a, 82.2, 85, 88, 91b.1, 125b.2, 130, 134b, 140b.2, 149–51, 217, 220, 257, 258, 285a.1, pls. LXVif., LXIXf., LXXII–LXXIV, LXXVII–LXXIX. For the crown with raised circular ornament and cross, cf. Dodd, *Stamps*, no. 29; Bellinger, *op. cit.*: Tiberius, nos. 2–4, 11–15, 20a.1, 20b.3, 62a.2, 62a.3, pls. LX–LXII, LXV; Maurice, nos. 33d, 41f, 56b.1, 58b, 216, 238, 240, pls. LXVIII.f., LXXVII; Zacos and Vegler, *op. cit.*, I, 1, 10, no. 7, variety 2. For the crown with trefoil and raised circular ornament, see Bellinger, *op. cit.*: Maurice, nos. 154.1, 159b.2, 159c.3, 161.2, 163b.3, 169a, 169c, 172d, 173, 176.1, 179, 185.3, 187.2, 189, 196.2, 197.1, 207, 210.1, 222, 233, pls. LXXIV–LXXVII.

<sup>13</sup> For a brief discussion of sixth- and seventh-century headdresses, with further references, see P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection* (Washington, D.C., 1968) (hereafter Grierson, *D.O. Coins*), II, pt. 1, 74f., 80–84. For Heraclian silver, see Dodd, *Stamps*, 135–211, nos. 37–74, table 1. A variant that may offer a parallel to the crown type on the Trier ivory appears on the round and long stamps of a plain silver dish in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, no. 51.24. A short-haired, beardless Heraclius wears a diadem comprised of small circles; above are feather- or scallop-shaped forms that increase in size toward the center. On the long stamp the crown appears to be surmounted by a cross, its arms suggested by four dots. Neither crown on these stamps has pendilia. Thanks to the kindness of Susan Boyd, Associate Curator of the Byzantine Collection at Dumbarton Oaks, I was able to examine this and other silver plates under a binocular microscope. On this plate, see M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, I, *Metalwork, Ceramics, Glass, Glyptics, Painting* (Washington, D.C., 1962), 21f., no. 16.3, pl. xx; also Dodd, *Stamps*, no. 44.

<sup>14</sup> See Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II, 1, 216–383, pls. VIII–XXII, where one finds, in addition to the variants on the silver stamps, plumed helmets (e.g., nos. 1–6), simple diadems (nos. 51–54), high crowns (no. 188), and rounded crowns (no. 189).

<sup>15</sup> The most thorough study of the fibula remains that of N. M. Běljaev, "Očerki po vizantijskoj arheologii. I. Fibula v Vizantii," *SemKond*, 3 (1929), 49–114; see also Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II, 1, 77f., with further references. For illustrations of the examples mentioned above, see W. F. Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (New York, 1961), pls. 53, 166, 244.

and by Constans II on issues spanning the years 651–68 (figs. 5, 6).<sup>16</sup> The fibula form thus supports the evidence provided by the crown and pushes the dating of the ivory into the seventh century.

Byzantine coins also provide parallels for the cross-carrying empress. Sophia, Constantina, and Leontia, wives respectively of Justin II, Maurice, and Phocas, appear on their husbands' coinage holding the cross staff. Sophia is depicted enthroned, and in most cases she cradles a short cross staff against her right arm and rests it on her lap (fig. 7). Constantina and Leontia stand and hold the cross across their bodies so that it rises over their right shoulders.<sup>17</sup> Later, especially in coins dated 629/30 or later, a long staff surmounted by a cross is carried by Heraclius and Constans II on some of their issues.<sup>18</sup> Imperial insignia therefore suggest a date for the Trier ivory no earlier than the late sixth or early seventh century.

Turning from imperial insignia to imperial ceremonial, a remarkable feature of the ivory is the importance of the empress. She greets the procession as it reaches the church, and the emperor seems about to hand her his candle. Our main source on Byzantine imperial ceremonial, however, does not record a single occasion on which the empress receives and greets the emperor outside a church. Aside from noting her movements in the instances of acclamation, coronation, and marriage, the *De Ceremoniis* mentions the empress' presence during Pentecost observances in the mitatorion of Hagia Sophia and her exit from it to receive the wives of dignitaries.<sup>19</sup> On Palm Sunday she receives in the Chrysotriklinos, "taking the crosses of those who enter following the ceremonial of the emperor which is also her own."<sup>20</sup> On Easter Monday, an

<sup>16</sup> Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II,1, 250f., nos. 13, 16, pl. VIII. On Constans' coins the gems are suspended on long chains. Grierson suggests Constans' beard hides the third pendant, an assumption I question: *op. cit.*, II,2, 424–35, nos. 19–43, 155, pls. xxvif., xxx. Běljaev had noted the comparison between the fibula of the emperor on the Trier ivory and one on a Heracleian coin: *op. cit.*, 96, 113.

<sup>17</sup> For illustrated examples of coins with Sophia, see Bellinger, *D.O. Coins*, I, nos. 22a.2, 23c, 24b.2, 24c, 25c.3, 27b, 29a, 30, 31, 32e.1, 33b.1, 34a, 36e.4, 37d, 38e.1, 39c, 40e, 42c, 44a, 46, 47a, 47d, 49c, 50, 51a, 52a, 53, 66.1, 67.1, 67.2, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74.2, 75.2, 77, 78.1, 79, 81.1, 82.1, 85.3, 92a, 93a, 94a.1, 95b.2, 99a, 99b.1, 100b.3, 100d.3, 101c, 102a.2, 103b, 104.1, 105.1, 106.2, 110.1, 117a, 117c, 121d, 122d, 123a.4, 123a.5, 123b, 124b.1, 125a.1, 126a, 130.1, 132.1, 133.3, 133.7, 135, 205.2, 206.2, pls. L–LVI, LIX. The exceptions to the description are Antiochene issues in which the staff rises over the left shoulder: nos. 150c, 152c.1, 153, 156.1, 157a.2, 157b.3, 159, 162.1, 163, 166, 167b.2, 175.3, 176, 179a.2, 183.2, pl. LVf. For coins with Constantina: *ibid.*, nos. 297–303, pl. LXXX; with Leontia: Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II,1, nos. 24b, 35a, 51.1, 51.3, 53a.2, 53b.2, 69a.2, 69b.3, 78b.1, 86.1, 88.1, 91b, 92.1, 95.1, 98, 103, pls. II–V. Anastasia appears with Tiberius on four Thessalonikan half-folles, where it is not possible to discern whether she has a cross staff in her arms; cf. Bellinger, *D.O. Coins*, I, nos. 23–26, pl. LXIII. Non-imperial cross-carrying females are rare in Early Byzantine art; for examples, see the personified Ecclesia in a late sixth–early seventh-century Syriac Old Testament, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Syr. 341, fol. 118r, in Beckwith, *E.C. and Byz. Art*, pl. 115; and the personified Sophia on a seal of the late sixth–early seventh century, in V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, V, pt. 1 (Paris, 1963), 43f., no. 49.

<sup>18</sup> For illustrated examples of Heraclius, see Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II,1, nos. 77b, 78.1, 105a.3, 105b.1, 105c.5, 108b, 109a, 112c, 117a.3, 117b.1, 117c.4, 118a.4, 118c.1, 123b, 124a, 125a.1, 125e, 126a, 127a.1, 152, pls. XI–XV. Except for nos. 77 and 78, overstruck folles of Phocas dated 613, the other examples date to 629/30 or later. For Constans II the cross staff is plainly visible on the following coins: *ibid.*, II,2, nos. 59, 60a.2, 60b, 60d, 61c.1, 61d, 64c.3, 64e.1, 65a.1, 66d.3, 67.1, 69a, 70a, 72a, 75c.1, 75c.3, 76c.1, 77b, 81c, 84b, 84d, 85b, 86c, 87b.2, pl. xxvif.

<sup>19</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitos, *De Ceremoniis*, I.9, ed. and trans. A. Vogt, *Constantine Porphyrogénète, Le Livre des cérémonies*, I, pt. 1 (repr. Paris, 1967), 61.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, I.41 (32), ed. Vogt, 164.

occasion in which the emperor carried a candle and headed the long procession to the Holy Apostles, he was not met by the empress at the church.<sup>21</sup> The *De Ceremoniis* thus fails to help in the identification of the occasion and locale depicted on the Trier ivory. Although it may be overly optimistic to seek in a tenth-century text the description of a pre-iconoclastic ceremony, the failure to find any parallel for the key role of the empress may indicate that the ivory records a singular event rather than one traditional in the imperial ceremonial of the capital.

A final iconographic aspect helpful in establishing the ivory's date is the bust of Christ. This Christ has a short beard, long wavy hair which falls behind his shoulders, and a cruciform nimbus. This type became ascendant after 550, as its appearance on a number of objects in a wide range of media testifies. Some examples are: a. the apse mosaic in the church of the Theotokos, St. Catherine's monastery, Mt. Sinai; b. an icon of Christ and c. a medallion portrait of Christ on the St. Peter icon, both at Mt. Sinai; d. medallions on the icons of SS. Sergius and Bacchus and e. of John the Baptist, both in Kiev; f. the Hermitage reliquary; g. the Cross of Justin II in the Treasury of St. Peter's, Rome (fig. 10); h. the Riha paten in the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul; i. the Stuma paten in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection; and j. a censer in the British Museum (fig. 11).<sup>22</sup> Thus, on the basis of iconographical evidence introduced here—the crown, the fibula, the cross staff, and the Christ type—I propose that the Trier Translation of Relics ivory is a post-Justinianic work.

Stylistic analysis, the alternative approach to the identification of the Translation ivory, has been all but avoided.<sup>23</sup> To a certain extent this is understandable, for there are no extant ivories which are readily comparable. Furthermore, the number of late sixth- and early seventh-century ivories is quite limited. What is notable about the Trier ivory from the stylistic perspective is the depth of carving. Despite the fact that the figures are often

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, I.10, ed. Vogt, 68.

<sup>22</sup> For illustrations and commentaries on these monuments, see for: a. dated 548–65, G. H. Forsyth and K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, I. The Church and Fortress of Justinian* (Ann Arbor, 1973), 11–16, pls. cxxxvi–cxli; b. Justinianic date likely, K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons, I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century* (Princeton, 1976) (hereafter Weitzmann, *Icons*), 13–15, pls. lf., xxxix–xli; c. late sixth or early seventh century, *ibid.*, 23–26, pls. viii–x, xlviii–li; G. and M. Soteriou, *Εκόνες τῆς Μονῆς Σινᾶ*, I (Athens, 1956), pls. 1–3; d. seventh century, Weitzmann, *Icons*, 28–30, pls. xii, liif.; and Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*, pl. 42; e. "about sixth century," Weitzmann, *Icons*, 32–35, pls. xiv, lvii; but late sixth or seventh century, Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *op. cit.*, pl. xi; f. after 550, Dodd, *Stamps*, 86f., nos. 17A and B; g. dated 565–78, Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *op. cit.*, pl. 69; h. dated 565–78, Dodd, *op. cit.*, 94f., no. 20; i. dated 565–78, *ibid.*, 108f., no. 27; and j. dated 605–10, *ibid.*, 130f., no. 35.

As the consular diptych of Justin of 540 in Berlin shows, the cruciform-nimbed, bearded Christ was part of official iconography before ca. 550; Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 31f., no. 33, pl. 7. Hypothesizing the relation of the Sinai icon of Christ to the founding of the monastery of Christ Chalkites, ca. 532, cf. M. Chatzidakis, "An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai," *ArtB*, 49 (1967), 197–207.

<sup>23</sup> The only substantial exceptions are Strzygowski and Wessel; see *infra*, p. 288ff. Pelekanidis attempts to find stylistic parallels for the ivory in early fifth-century works, *op. cit.* (note 6 *supra*), 363–69.

stacked four deep, at all levels they appear to have been freed from the background. Heads and limbs are in many cases completely undercut. As is typical of many Early Byzantine ivories, the Translation ivory exhibits a *horror vacui*. There are no neutral passages; the entire surface is given over to figural and architectural detailing. Ivories which exhibit a comparable depth of carving, such as the Ariadnes of Florence and Vienna, or the central portion of the Barberini diptych in the Louvre featuring the emperor on horseback, nonetheless retain large neutral background areas (figs. 12, 13).<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the notation of detail is realistic, unlike the Barberini ivory or, for another example, a consular diptych of Anastasius in Paris,<sup>25</sup> where the accretion of detail is iconographically but not spatially coherent. The stacking of the figures and the relationship of figures and setting suggest a pictorial space of considerable depth. The depiction of the architectural elements is painstaking. Moreover, what is represented is rational or buildable, unlike the fantastic structures providing the setting for the saints in the dome of Hagios Georgios, Salonika, or the inhabited wall of the St. Mark ivory in the Louvre (fig. 14).<sup>26</sup> Although the figures on the Trier ivory are large in relation to the architecture, they are logically located in the architectural space. One may contrast to this the ambiguous position of the archangel Michael in relation to his setting in the British Museum ivory.<sup>27</sup> The only dislocations in this surprisingly realistic world are the basilica and its flanking structures, whose scale is disproportionally small. The Translation of Relics is, all in all, reported in a down-to-earth, realistic, documentary fashion.

The figures are vigorously and confidently carved. Despite the crowding, especially in the central area behind the emperor, each figure retains an individuality, whether by position, glance, or features. The spectators in the second story of the colonnaded building are differentiated despite their similar gestures. On the ledge of the third story the setting of the busts in forward and rear positions relieves what might have been a monotonous passage on an otherwise lively surface. Although the coherent spatial construction and autonomy of the figures testify to the carver's training in the classical tradition, his figures are not classically proportioned, noble-looking types. Rather, they are coarse and sometimes, as in the case of the empress, dumpy in appearance. The heads are large in relation to the figures' heights and have prominent, fleshy features. Locks of hair are swept back from the foreheads adding emphasis to the eyes. For the most part the necks are long, while the legs, especially from the knees down, are short. The draperies are thick in substance and heavy in appearance, with thick, looping folds, suggesting that

<sup>24</sup> For the Ariadnes, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 38, no. 51f., pl. 13; for the Barberini diptych, *ibid.*, 36f., no. 48, pl. 12.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 28, no. 21, pl. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Illustrating one section of Hagios Georgios, and with further references, cf. Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*, pl. 1. On the St. Mark ivory, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 71, no. 144; K. Weitzmann, "The Ivories of the So-Called Grado Chair," *DOP*, 26 (1972) (hereafter Weitzmann, "So-Called Grado Chair"), 53f., fig. 15; and *infra*, p. 288f.

<sup>27</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 57, no. 109, pl. 32; Beckwith, *E. C. and Byz. Art*, 37, pl. 68.

the Translation has not been carved out of ivory but executed in dough. The carver possessed great skill in suggesting the corporeality of his figures, even when working on such a small scale and stacking the figures four deep. His composition, which draws on the Roman *adventus*, is complex but legible.<sup>28</sup> Despite the movement of the action from left to right, the observer's eye does not pause at the empress as the procession has, but moves back to the left, following the ascent of the spectators' heads, taking in the details of the background architecture and the genre-like incidents on the roof of the church. The artist has reconciled movement and stability: whereas the emperor and his guard are depicted standing still, having reached their destination, the wagon carrying the bishops is still in movement. The driver appears to be reining in his horses while the bishops rock about on their seat, keeping their hold on the reliquary.

No other ivory survives that displays a similar set of stylistic qualities, but a number of ivories do present one or more of the characteristics noted. Such examples as the Ariadnes display a clarity of architectural and costume detailing and depth of carving, but the figure style is quite different (fig. 12). Other ivory groups, represented by the diptychs in Berlin, showing Christ and Mary have pudgy, round-headed figures but are carved in far lower relief and provide decorative and symbolic settings rather than "real" ones.<sup>29</sup> The carving styles of the throne of Archbishop Maximianus in Ravenna fail to provide any analogies, nor does the beautiful classicism of the Michael diptych.<sup>30</sup> The large staring eyes of the figures on the consular diptych of Magnus in the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris, and the swept back, wavy hair of the personifications provide parallels to two features characteristic of the Trier ivory, but again the basic figure style and carving technique are different.<sup>31</sup> On the testimony of these ivories, Constantinople would seem to have to be eliminated as the provenance of the Trier ivory. On the other hand, these ivories are primarily Justinianic in date; their negative testimony may therefore merely support the iconographic findings, that is, that the ivory is post-Justinianic. Before claiming the Trier ivory as a unique example of post-Justinianic Constantinopolitan carving,<sup>32</sup> let us see if it might not have originated outside the capital.

Strzygowski hypothesized an Egyptian provenance and sixth-century date, alleging similarities between the Trier ivory and the ivory in the Louvre which he identified as St. Mark enthroned amidst his successors (fig. 14). On

<sup>28</sup> For the historical and literary precedents for the *adventus*-influenced translation, see N. Gussone, "Adventus-Zeremoniell und Translation von Reliquien. Victricius von Rouen, De laude sanctorum," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 10 (1976), 125–33.

<sup>29</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 67f., no. 137, pl. 42; Beckwith, *E.C. and Byz. Art*, 37, pl. 67.

<sup>30</sup> On the throne, see Volbach, *op. cit.*, 68f., no. 140, pl. 43; but settling on a Constantinopolitan provenance, see Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*, 199, pl. 87. For the Michael ivory, see *supra*, note 27.

<sup>31</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 29, no. 24, pl. 5.

<sup>32</sup> In "The Andrews Diptych and Some Related Ivories," *ArtB*, 36 (1954), 255–61, E. Rosenbaum proposes a seventh-century (Heracleian) date for the Andrews diptych, the Venatio ivory in Liverpool, and plaques with apostles in the Victoria and Albert and Louvre museums (cf. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, nos. 59, 122f., 233). Her hypothesis has not met with critical acceptance; see J. Beckwith, *The Andrews Diptych*, Victoria and Albert Museum Monographs, XII (London, 1958), 21f.; *idem*, *E.C. and Byz. Art*, 21.

the basis of this subject choice, he dated the latter ivory 607–9 and provided it with an Alexandrian origin.<sup>33</sup> The Egyptian provenance of both ivories was based on comparisons with a wooden sculpture, in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, depicting the Siege of a City, an object having more certain Egyptian origin.<sup>34</sup> The relationship of the Trier ivory to either of these sculptures is very limited indeed, amounting to shared compositional and technical *tours-de-force*. The three objects display crowds or clusters of figures against an architectural background inhabited by smaller figures. But such fundamental aspects as figure style and spatial relations differ entirely. In contrast to the compact, fleshy figures of the Trier ivory master, the Berlin sculptor uses stiff, fairly well-proportioned figures, and the St. Mark master tall, emaciated, almost cylindrical ones. The Trier ivory master varied his figures and set them off against one another to suggest corporeality, autonomy, and existence in space. Each figure on the St. Mark ivory and the Berlin sculpture is finely and distinctly carved but lacks individuality and autonomy. Mark's disciples form a sort of human wreath around him, while the soldiers on the Berlin sculpture are packed together in iscephalic groupings in standardized battle motifs. Both the St. Mark ivory and the Berlin sculpture display an interest in rich surface detail (note the garments, the patterns on shields and armor, the stonework of the city walls), a quality which is alien to the Trier ivory. The interest of the master of that ivory was in the event, in reportage, in clarity of structure of the figures, architecture, and composition. Thus, their exploitation of the media—wood and ivory—constitute the sole grounds for comparing these three works.<sup>35</sup>

To the monuments used by Strzygowski to substantiate a sixth-century Egyptian provenance for the Trier ivory, Wessel added the six ivory plaques incorporated in the chancel of Aachen Cathedral and a plaque with the Dioscuri and Europa in Trieste.<sup>36</sup> The grounds for his comparison between the Aachen and Trier ivories are secondary figures, e.g., putti on the Aachen ivories and roofers on the Trier ivory, and such minor details as human eyes ("Menschenaugen") of the horses. Wessel admits the style of the main figures on the Aachen reliefs "weicht . . . von dem der Trierer Tafel nicht unerheblich ab."<sup>37</sup> Even a superficial inspection of equine eyes in Early Christian and Byzantine art reveals that most horses share this apparent human form.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Strzygowski, *op. cit.* (note 5 *supra*), 71–89.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 65–71. The Berlin sculpture is from Ashmunein; cf. J. Beckwith, *Coptic Sculpture, 300–1300* (London, 1963), 15, pl. 46.

<sup>35</sup> It might be rewarding to reconsider the St. Mark ivory in relation to certain plaques belonging to the "so-called Grado chair": features such as hair, facial structure, body shapes, and the decorative treatment of surfaces have parallels among certain ivories of the later group; see Weitzmann, "So-Called Grado Chair," 43–91, esp. 70–73.

<sup>36</sup> Wessel, *op. cit.* (note 4 *supra*), 12–15; on the Aachen ivories, Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 45f., nos. 72–77, pl. 24f.; on the Trieste plaque, *ibid.*, 48, no. 82, pl. 26.

<sup>37</sup> Wessel, *op. cit.*, 13.

<sup>38</sup> E.g., the Barberini diptych, the Anastasius diptych, the lid of an ivory chest with a heraldic composition of equestrian emperors, and the Bobbio pyx; for illustrations, see Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*, pls. 89, 91, 97; and Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (note 15 *supra*), pl. 84. Other horses appear in the mosaic pavement of the Great Palace; see G. Brett, W. J. Macaulay, R. B. K. Stevenson, eds., *The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors . . . First Report* (Oxford, 1947), pls. 30, 48.

Proportions are Wessel's basis for comparison between the Trieste and Trier ivories; here again he errs, for the Trieste figures are far dumpier, with larger heads, than the figures on the Trier ivory. In both sets of comparisons Wessel fails to take into consideration the fundamental character of each work—the order and harmony of the composition of the Trier ivory versus extreme *horror vacui* and a disjunction between figures and settings in the Aachen and Trieste panels.<sup>39</sup>

The Syro-Palestine region has never been considered as the place of origin of the Trier ivory, though it did have a continuous tradition of ivory carving in the Early Christian and Early Byzantine periods. In a recent series of articles, Weitzmann has focused on the pictorial arts of this region, establishing the existence of a long-lived school of ivory manufacture, schools of icon painting, and independent iconographic traditions associated with the *loca sancta*.<sup>40</sup> He has reaffirmed the vitality and the creativity of a region all but written off for the post-Justinianic period.<sup>41</sup> Although a study of Syro-Palestinian ivory sculpture of the Early Christian–Early Byzantine periods has yet to be written, some ivories, albeit of widely differing dates, display qualities which are worth considering in relation to the Trier ivory. The ivory pyxis in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, a Syro-Palestinian work of the fifth century, is notable for the monumental grace of its Hellenistic-looking figures (fig. 15).<sup>42</sup> Abraham, a tall, handsome, contrapposto figure, is seen interrupted in the moment and movement of sacrifice. Christ, enthroned on the opposite face of the pyxis in majestic authority, flanked by apostles and disciples, has comparable broad, easy movements and a convincing structure beneath his draperies. The artist has set his figures comfortably on the surface of the pyxis, provided a plausible spatial setting, overlapped some figures without minimizing their volumes, and included the *locus sanctus* of the sacrifice.

The noble Hellenism of the Berlin pyxis was not frequently repeated in Syro-Palestinian ivories. Very little of the production of this area, however, reached the artistic level of the Berlin pyxis. In some sixth-century Syro-Palestinian works, as, for example, the Werden pyxis, one finds echoes of the Berlin pyxis in a figure style that is significantly different from the toothpick limbs, angular movements, and beetle-like bodies of the contemporary,

<sup>39</sup> A. Hermann, in "Mit der Hand singen. Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung der Trierer Elfenbeintafel," *JbAChr*, 1 (1958), 105–8, studied the gesture of the figures in the windows of the colonnaded building. Although it persisted in Egypt to modern times the gesture was not limited to Egypt; therefore it cannot be used to support an Egyptian provenance for the ivory to the exclusion of other possibilities.

<sup>40</sup> Weitzmann, "So-Called Grado Chair," 43–91; and *idem*, "Loca Sancta and the Representational Arts of Palestine," *DOP*, 28 (1974), 31–55; see also *idem*, "The Jephthah Panel in the Bema of the Church of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai," *DOP*, 18 (1964), 341–52; and *idem*, *Icons* (note 22 *supra*), 6f. and *passim*.

<sup>41</sup> E. Kitzinger's review of the arts of Syro-Palestine in the sixth and seventh centuries is fleeting and negative ("a backwater"): "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen-Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich, 1958), 33–38. In two lengthy articles, G. de Frankovich fails to come to grips with the region: "L'Arte siriana e il suo influsso sulla pittura medioevale nell'oriente e nell'occidente," *Commentari*, 2 (1951), 3–16, 75–92, 143–51; and "L'Egitto, la Siria e Costantinopoli: Problemi e metodo," *RIASA*, N.S. 11–12 (1963), 83–229.

<sup>42</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 77, no. 161, pl. 53; Weitzmann, "Loca Sancta," 46f., fig. 37.



but better known, Murano diptych in Ravenna and its relatives.<sup>43</sup> The Nativity on the Werden pyxis is a lively composition, inhabited by large, mobile figures; the shepherd, for example, has strong limbs and a dense heaviness. The vitality and intensity of this figure continue up into his hair, which seems to have been combed back from the forehead with the fingers, a hair style similar to that of some of the secondary figures on the Trier ivory. In the earliest plaques of the "so-called Grado chair," particularly the Annunciation in the Castello Sforzesco in Milan and the Nativity in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (fig. 16), dated by Weitzmann to the late seventh or early eighth centuries,<sup>44</sup> the figures retain suggestive reminiscences of corporeality. See, for example, the hip, shoulder, and lower arm of Gabriel, or the major part of the figures of Joseph and Mary in the Nativity. But the emphasis on plasticity has been replaced by an emphasis on decorative surface effects, prominent in the architectural background and the clothing. The notation of space and setting has changed; instead of a simple and logical spatial distribution of figures and setting, the space is negated, the architecture unbuildable. The rejection of classical principles of composition is apparent in the Nativity, where a recently delivered Mary seems to float together with her raft-like bed within the conscientiously noted elements of the Bethlehem *locus sanctus*. Despite their differences, certain qualities common to the Berlin and Werden pyxides and the Annunciation and Nativity plaques permit us to extrapolate some basic elements of Syro-Palestinian style: the classical tradition persists—albeit only vestigially in the later ivories—in the depiction of the human body in terms of corporeality, plasticity, recognizable anatomy, mobility, and existence in space. A logical relationship exists between figures and setting in terms of space and content; settings function with the figures as carriers of meaning. These qualities are also basic to the Trier ivory, and although they are too general to hypothesize a Syro-Palestinian provenance for the ivory solely on their witness, they do encourage a further look into Syro-Palestinian art, at painting and metalwork of the sixth and seventh centuries, for parallels to the ivory.

In the Rossano and Sinope Gospels and in the Vienna Genesis figures are generally compact, organically built, autonomous, mobile, and intense.<sup>45</sup> The several styles and hands of the artists responsible for these miniatures provide parallels to the various physical types that appear on the Trier ivory. For example, the imperial couple might be juxtaposed to Salome and Herod in the Sinope Gospels (fig. 17); the men, in particular, seem to belong to a common

<sup>43</sup> For the Werden pyxis, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 80, no. 169, pl. 54; and Weitzmann, *Icons*, 47; for the Murano diptych, Volbach, *op. cit.*, 64, no. 125, pl. 39.

<sup>44</sup> Weitzmann, "So-Called Grado Chair," 65–67, fig. 1 f., and for the dating and provenance, 73–91; and on the Nativity plaque, see *idem*, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, III. *Ivories and Steatites* (Washington, D.C., 1972), 37–42, no. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Subscribing to a Syro-Palestinian provenance for these MSS, see Kitzinger, *op. cit.*, 35f.; and K. Weitzmann, *The Fresco Cycle of S. Maria in Castelseprio* (Princeton, 1951), 66. But see Beckwith, *E.C. and Byz. Art*, 58f. For facsimiles, see Rossano Gospels, Rossano, Palazzo Arcivescovile, Museo Diocesano: A. Muñoz, *Il Codice purpureo di Rossano ed il frammento Sinopense* (Rome, 1907); Sinope Gospels, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, suppl. gr. 1286: A. Grabar, *Les Peintures de l'Évangéliste de Sinope* (Paris, 1948); Vienna Genesis, Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Vindob. theol. cod. 31: H. Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna, 1931).

(imperial?) type, with their large heads, full heads of hair, and clean-shaven round faces. One need only take into account the different figure and facial types in the healing scenes in the Sinope Gospels to be struck by the similarity between the Herod in the manuscript and the emperor on the Trier ivory. The full-page illustrations of the Crucifixion and Ascension in the Rabbula Gospels have figures that display the same coarse physicality as the Trier ivory figures (fig. 18).<sup>46</sup> The illuminator was concerned with expressing the corporeality and solidity of his figures. Thus, the figures, particularly in the Ascension, display small waists, wide hips, big buttocks, and, in the case of Mary, large breasts. Although the illuminators were copying standardized compositions, they did not fail to animate their figures by the use of postures, gestures, and glances. The physical reactions of the figures on the Translation ivory are limited by their ceremonial context; nonetheless, as observed above, the artist has balanced movement and stasis and kept the scene vital by varying the expressions of his figures.

The painted lid of a wooden reliquary in the Museo Sacro of the Vatican, of the late sixth–early seventh century, provides another glimpse at Syro-Palestinian miniature painting (fig. 19).<sup>47</sup> Small, eager figures enact five scenes in the life of Christ in an animated manner. The compositions are traditional, but the figures convey through their stance, gesture, and expression the lasting significance of the events in which they are involved. Once again, the physical type approaches that of the Trier ivory, although in comparison to the ivory and the manuscripts just mentioned the figure proportions have changed; the bodies are shorter, but still well-fleshed, the heads large. Two icons of Syro-Palestinian provenance at Mt. Sinai offer points of comparison to the Trier ivory.<sup>48</sup> The surviving wing of a lost Nativity diptych of the late sixth or seventh century, showing a praying monk and shepherds pointing to the star of Bethlehem, provides further examples of the anatomical autonomy and spatial existence characteristic of figures in Syro-Palestinian art. The monk, a short, sturdy figure, the particulars of whose habit are carefully noted, appears fully capable of movement. The three shepherds, depicted in active, gesturing postures, coherently overlap one another without uncomfortable crowding. The four figures on the well-preserved icon of the Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace, a seventh-century work (fig. 20), have round, full faces and prominent cheeks and eyes. These features and their free coiffures offer a significant parallel to the style of the figures on the Trier ivory. In addition, on the ivory and the two icons the conscientious presentation of clothing, rendered in such detail that one could easily make copies, is comparable. On the icons, however, a linear system has begun to break up the solid forms of the drapery, a harbinger of the direction Syro-Palestinian art will take when plastic effects are gradually eliminated in favor of linear

<sup>46</sup> Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. I, cod. 56; see C. Cecchelli, J. Furlani, M. Salmi, *The Rabbula Gospels* (Lausanne-Olten, 1959), fols. 13<sup>r</sup>, 13<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> C. R. Morey, "The Painted Panel from the Sancta Sanctorum," *Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Paul Clemen*, ed. W. Worringer (Düsseldorf-Bonn, 1926), 151–67.

<sup>48</sup> Weitzmann, *Icons*, 47, 56, pls. xxii, lxxf., lxxxiii f.

elements.<sup>49</sup> Paralleling this development is the elimination of action, movement, and emotion in favor of static compositions, where the viewer supplies the emotional content.<sup>50</sup> An icon of the Virgin and Child, surviving at Mt. Sinai in a highly damaged state, is close stylistically to the Three Youths icon.<sup>51</sup> To judge from the handling of the Virgin's mantle, it may be somewhat later or by a lesser artist. But the round face and large eyes document once again the popularity of a physical type, found on the Trier ivory, in Syro-Palestinian art of the seventh century.

Turning briefly to metalwork, several objects of Syro-Palestinian provenance display characteristics that may be compared to the Trier ivory. Three silver plaques or book covers, part of the "Antioch Treasure" in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, are Syrian works of the late sixth or early seventh century.<sup>52</sup> St. Peter, in particular, supplies a useful parallel for the ivory (fig. 21); his drapery is of a remarkably thick and heavy fabric, with soft, rich folds bordered by crisp, deep channels, resembling the draperies on the ivory. The facial type of Peter, with its short beard and short hair, deep-set eyes, barb-like nose, and small mouth, has much in common with the two bishops on the ivory. A bronze relief of an apostle or saint in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, identified as a Syrian work of the sixth century on the basis of the Metropolitan Museum plaques, again compares well with the Trier ivory in terms of the heavy, deeply cut, gently looping folds of the pallium (fig. 22).<sup>53</sup> Last, a silver fragment in the Louvre of a saint with a cross, from a reliquary or book cover, displays deep furrows in the drapery, more extreme than those on the Metropolitan Museum plaques. The staring eyes and short beard are comparable to those of the bishops on the Trier ivory.<sup>54</sup>

On the basis of these comparisons, I suggest that the Translation ivory is a work of Syro-Palestinian manufacture of the late sixth or early seventh century. While specific details of the ivory have parallels in Constantinopolitan works, the basic figure style—the human aesthetic—strongly suggests a Syro-Palestinian origin. One of the characteristics of Early Byzantine art of this region is the use of a significant setting; thus, for example, the Nativity is represented within the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Sacrifice

<sup>49</sup> The icon of St. Peter, also in the Mt. Sinai collection, partakes of the same transitional phase; cf. *ibid.*, 23–27, pls. VIII–X, XLVIII–LI; and G. and M. Soteriou, *op. cit.* (note 22 *supra*), I, pls. 1–3.

<sup>50</sup> Compare, for example, the following icons of Palestinian provenance, dating from the seventh to ninth centuries, at Mt. Sinai: Ascension; Chairete; Crucifixion; triptych wings with SS. Peter, Paul, Nicholas, and John Chrysostom; triptych wing with SS. Chariton and Theodosios; cf. Weitzmann, *Icons*, 31f., 50f., 57–59, 64f., pls. XIII, XXI, XXIII, XXVI, LVf., LXXV, LXXXIV–LXXXVII, XCI; and G. and M. Soteriou, *op. cit.*, I, pls. 10f., 21–23, 25, 29. In ivories, too, the elimination of plasticity, action, and emotional or dramatic content are parallel developments; compare the pyxides of the fifth and sixth centuries with the "so-called Grado chair" ivories, in Weitzmann, *Ivories and Steatites*, 31–36; *idem*, "So-Called Grado Chair," figs. 1–14.

<sup>51</sup> *Idem*, "Jephthah Panel" (note 40 *supra*), 345f., fig. 8; and *Icons*, 51, no. B28, pl. LXXVI.

<sup>52</sup> For illustrations and literature, see E. C. Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Treasures*, Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung, IX (Bern, 1973), 20–23, figs. 15–17.

<sup>53</sup> Ross, *Catalogue* (note 13 *supra*), I, 50, no. 55, pl. XXXVIII.

<sup>54</sup> H. Buschhausen, *Die spätromischen Metallschreine und frühchristlichen Reliquiare*, I. Katalog, WByzSt, IX (Vienna, 1971), 256, cat. no. B 23, pl. 61. Buschhausen cites E. Coche de la Ferté, who gives the piece a fifth–sixth-century Syrian origin.

of Isaac makes reference to the stepped altar set up to memorialize this event in Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, the translation of relics depicted on the Trier ivory takes place in a specifically rendered setting, giving the viewer the impression of looking at the pictorial record of an historical incident as unique and as important as a Biblical event, and as recognizable by its setting as it is by the actions of its protagonists. In the post-Justinianic era in the Syro-Palestinian region there was one translation of relics of supreme importance: that is, the return to Jerusalem of the rediscovered True Cross by the Emperor Heraclius.<sup>56</sup>

In 614 Jerusalem was captured by the Persians, its churches and monasteries were burned, its treasures taken as spoils, and large numbers of its populace were murdered or taken into captivity. In 622, following an inexplicable delay, Byzantine armies took to the field against the enemy. By early 628 the Persians had succumbed to a combination of internal discord and Byzantine strength.<sup>57</sup> At the end of the year Heraclius celebrated his triumph in Constantinople. He then spent the greater part of 629 traveling in Asia Minor, meeting with the Persians for treaty writing purposes. Late that year or early in 630 the Persians surrendered the True Cross to Heraclius.<sup>58</sup> Then, according to a contemporary witness, Antiochus Strategos:

... King Heraclius took [the life-giving tree, the Cross of Christ] to Jerusalem on the occasion of his going there with Martina, who was daughter of his father's brother; and he had married her against the law, and therefore was very much afraid that the high priests would rebuke him on the score of that indecent action. And when he had entered Jerusalem, he on the 21st of... March re-established in its own place the glorious and precious tree of the Cross, sealed as before in a chest, just as it had been carried away. And it was set up altogether unopened; for just as the ark of the covenant was left unopened among strangers, so was left the life-giving tree of the Cross, which had vanquished death and trampled on Hell. Then King Heraclius, seeing the glorious event—namely, the restoration of the holy places, which had been rebuilt by the blessed Modestus, was much rejoiced and ordered him to be consecrated patriarch over Jerusalem....<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> On the iconography of the Nativity and the Sacrifice of Isaac, see Weitzmann, "*Loca Sancta*" (note 40 *supra*), 36–39, 46f.

<sup>56</sup> A. Frolow, "La Vraie Croix et les expéditions d'Héraclius en Perse," *REB*, 11 (1953) (hereafter Frolow, "Vraie Croix"), 88–105; P. Lemerle, "Quelques remarques sur le règne d'Héraclius," *StM*, ser. 3, 1, 2 (1960), 347–53; S. Spain Alexander, "Heraclius, Byzantine Imperial Ideology, and the David Plates," *Speculum*, 52 (1977) (hereafter Spain Alexander, "Heraclius"), 217–37.

<sup>57</sup> On the Persian War, see the works cited in note 56, with further references; and C. Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity," *EHR*, 90 (1975), 721–47.

<sup>58</sup> On the chronology of events immediately after the war, see Frolow, "Vraie Croix," 93–105; *Giorgio di Pisidia: Poemi*, I. *Panegirici epici*, ed. A. Pertusi (hereafter ed. Pertusi, *Poemi*), StPB, VII (Ettal, 1959), 230–37.

<sup>59</sup> F. C. Conybeare, trans., "Antiochus Strategos' Account of the Sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 614," *EHR*, 25 (1910), 516.

The Armenian Bishop Sebêos, writing in the 660s, described how Heraclius, having received the Cross, returned to Jerusalem with his royal staff:

...arriving at the city with all the ecclesiastical pomp which had escaped the hands of the enemy...there was much joy that day... the noise of crying and sighs, copious tears, an immense flame in all hearts, a rending of the bowels of the king, the princes, all the soldiers, and residents of the city. No one was able to chant the divine hymns because of the deep and poignant emotion of the king and the multitudes. He set [the Cross] up again in its place and put back all the ecclesiastical objects, each in its place. He gave blessings to all the churches and residents and took money for incense.<sup>60</sup>

It is in this historical context that I believe the Translation of Relics ivory in Trier belongs. Historical and art historical sources support this hypothesis, as we shall now see.

To begin with, the setting of the Translation: the procession heads toward a basilical church, against one flank of which are a two-storeyed structure and a rotunda-like structure. Although physically juxtaposed, the three structures are not proportionally related. Does this architecture correspond to what we know of the Holy Sepulcher complex in the Early Byzantine period, particularly as its monuments appeared in art? Founded by Constantine the Great, the walled rectangular complex comprised, from east to west, a propylon; an atrium; the *ecclesia maiore*, or martyrium, a basilical church; a second atrium, in which the site of the Crucifixion was marked by a monumental cross erected later, and, nearby, a church in which the relics of the True Cross were kept; at the western end of the atrium the Anastasis, the grotto where Christ was buried, over which a rotunda was built by the end of the fourth century; to the south of the Anastasis a baptistery; and edging the precinct walls apartments and service buildings.<sup>61</sup> The basilica and rotunda depicted on the Trier ivory may well be the martyrium and rotunda, both repaired at the conclusion of the Persian War by Modestus.<sup>62</sup> The famous Early Christian mosaic in S. Pudenziana in Rome (fig. 23) shows Christ enthroned amidst His apostles against a background of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>63</sup> Behind the throne rises the mound of Golgotha, surmounted by a large, gemmed cross; to the

<sup>60</sup> *Histoire d'Héraclius par l'Evêque Sebêos*, ed. and trans. F. Macler (Paris, 1904), 90f. For the dates, see G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, rev. ed., trans. J. M. Hussey (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), 89.

<sup>61</sup> The basic work on the complex remains H. Vincent and F.-M. Abel, *Jérusalem: Recherches de topographie, d'archéologie et d'histoire*, II. *Jérusalem nouvelle* (Paris, 1914), 89–300, esp. 154–217; more recently, C. Coüasnon, *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem*, The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1972 (London, 1974).

<sup>62</sup> For Modestus' works, see Coüasnon, *ibid.*, *passim*; the author does not summarize Modestus' activities. Also documenting seventh-century repairs, cf. J. T. Milik, "Notes d'épigraphie et de topographie palestiniennes. IX. Sanctuaires chrétiens de Jérusalem à l'époque arabe (VII<sup>e</sup>–X<sup>e</sup> s.)," *RBibl*, 67 (1960), 358f.

<sup>63</sup> G. Matthiae, *Mosaici Medioevale delle Chiese di Roma* (Rome, 1967), I, 55–76, II, pls. 36, 38–48.

left is a cluster of pitch-roofed edifices, prominent among them a rotunda with arched openings. This complex is generally identified as the Holy Sepulcher and the rotunda as the Anastasis. Another and more striking parallel for the rotunda on the Trier ivory is found on an ivory leaf in the Castello Sforzesco in Milan (fig. 25).<sup>64</sup> Above the scene of the Maries addressing the angel is a truncated domical structure with the familiar ribbed dome and arched windows. In the Bavarian National Museum in Munich a related ivory depicting the Ascension portrays the building as having a domical second storey atop a cubical base.<sup>65</sup> This anomaly apparently results from the copying of models like the Milan ivory: the lower half of the plaque has been misunderstood as depicting the entire ground-floor elevation of the rotunda and interpreted as a rectangular solid. In addition, the Munich ivory supplies the second storey with a complex arcaded sheathing; between its supports portrait roundels rest on truncated columns. By the late sixth and early seventh centuries a new iconography of the Anastasis had developed in which the interior of the building was shown. The structures around the actual tomb are emphasized, as, for example, on the lid of the wooden reliquary in the Museo Sacro (fig. 19).<sup>66</sup> But the persistence of the earlier iconography of the building is documented by a mid-sixth-century ivory belt buckle in Notre Dame la Major in Arles, by the Trier Translation ivory, and by a seventh–eighth-century bread mold in the Cleveland Museum of Art, which provides an aspatial view of the Holy Sepulcher complex, containing the two-storeyed domed rotunda, the martyrium, and, in the foreground, an arcade.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, in the Utrecht Psalter, a ninth-century Carolingian manuscript which is a storehouse of Early Christian and Early Byzantine forms and iconographical motifs, one finds several examples of tile-roofed basilicas, rotundas, and even sizable arcaded structures. The illustration of the Apostles' Creed presents a notable detail: the scene of the three Maries addressing the angel takes place before a domed rotunda with keyhole windows which rises incongruously from a monumental sarcophagus-like object (fig. 24).<sup>68</sup>

As a result of such comparisons I suggest that the basilica and the rotunda on the Trier ivory represent the two major edifices of the Holy Sepulcher

<sup>64</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 58, no. 111, pl. 33.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 57f., no. 110, pl. 33; likewise, one plaque of the Maskell Casket in the British Museum, *ibid.*, 60, no. 116, pl. 35.

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, the Palestinian ampullae, the Rabbula Gospels, and the lid of the wooden reliquary, illustrated in Weitzmann, "*Loca Sancta*," 41–43, figs. 17f., 21–24.

<sup>67</sup> For the ivory in Arles, see Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 92, no. 215, pl. 51. For an illustration of the Cleveland bread mold, no. 51.152, see the catalog of the exhibition, *The Age of Spirituality*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Nov. 1977–Feb. 1978 (forthcoming).

<sup>68</sup> Utrecht, University Library, MS 32, fol. 90r: E. T. de Wald, *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter* (Princeton, 1933), pl. cXLII, and pls. XIII and XXXVIII; for architectural forms resembling those on the ivory, see pls. CIII, CXVI, CXX, CXXXIX. The early form of the rotunda is popular in Carolingian art; see the following ivories: Three Women at the Tomb, Florence, Museo Nazionale, where the arcaded exterior follows the Munich ivory; two plaques with christological scenes, Aachen, Cathedral Treasury; the Harrach diptych, Schnütgenmuseum, Cologne; a bookcover with the Crucifixion, Narbonne, St.-Just Cathedral Treasury; illustrated in W. Braunsfels, et al., *Karl der Grosse. Werke und Wirkung* (Aachen, 1965), 341–46, nos. 527, 529, 531f., figs. 98, 100f., 103; Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, nos. 220, 226, 236, and 232. For further illustrations, see S. Ferber, "Crucifixion Iconography in a Group of Carolingian Ivory Plaques," *ArtB*, 48 (1966), 323–34.

complex, the *ecclesia maiore* and the Anastasis rotunda, without, however, representing them in their actual spatial and proportional relationships. The two-storeyed pitch-roofed structure next to the rotunda on the basilica's flank may be its narthex. A more intriguing prospect is that it is the edifice built near the actual site of the Crucifixion, the church of Golgotha, where the relics of the True Cross were housed and seen by pilgrims since the days of Egeria.<sup>69</sup> The fact that the doors of this structure are open may suggest that it is the destination of the translation procession. To my knowledge, there are no representations of this chapel other than on Arculf's plan of the complex, where a rectangular outline is marked *golgotha* + *eccla*.<sup>70</sup>

If these identifications are correct, then the three-storeyed structure behind the basilica and the gate-like edifice in the background of the Trier ivory should also represent buildings in contemporary Jerusalem. One possibility for the former is the *cardo maximus* of the city, the major north-south avenue. Flanked by monumental colonnades, the *cardo maximus* provided the main access to the Holy Sepulcher complex. A section of its west colonnade was transformed to serve as the propylon of the complex, as documented in the plan of the city of Jerusalem on the map of the Holy Land in a sixth-century mosaic pavement from Madaba.<sup>71</sup> I wonder, too, if the arcade behind Christ and His apostles in the S. Pudenziana mosaic (fig. 23) may not depict this same feature. The difficulty in this hypothesis is the transformation of a colonnaded (Madaba mosaic) to an arcaded (Trier ivory, Cleveland bread mold, S. Pudenziana mosaic) form and the addition of extra storeys on the Trier ivory. The structure at the left on the ivory may be the Damascus Gate or the Tetrapylon.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> For a hypothesis on the location of the church of Golgotha, see Coüasnon, *op. cit.*, 50–53, pls. vii f., xv. Egeria records services in this church for Holy Thursday, when offerings were made and communion given (*Itinerarium*, 35), and on Good Friday, when the relics of the True Cross were displayed for veneration (*ibid.*, 37), ed. and trans. H. Pétré, *Ethérie. Journal de voyage*, SC, XXI (Paris, 1948), 226f., 232–37. Egeria's terminology is often ambiguous: she refers to this church as *ad crucem* (e.g., *Itinerarium*, 25, 39, ed. Pétré, pp. 204, 242), *post crucem* (*ibid.*, 35, p. 226), and *in Golgotha post crucem* (*ibid.*, 37, p. 232), terms also used as points of reference for the area around the site of the Crucifixion and for the martyrion (*ibid.*, 25, 27, 30, pp. 200, 202, 204, 208, 220). Documenting Modestus' repairs of the Church of Golgotha, see Milik, *op. cit.*, 359.

<sup>70</sup> The plan of Arculf, who was in Jerusalem ca. 680, is in Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, MS 458, fol. 4v, in Adamnanus' *De Locis Sanctis*, a text edited by P. Geyer, *Itinera Hierosolymitana. Saeculi III–VIII*, CSEL, XXXIX (Prague-Vienna-Leipzig, 1898), 219–37. For a reproduction of the plan, see Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, 223, fig. 122.

L. Palustre thought the Trier ivory was a fifth-century Latin work on the basis of architecture and depth of carving; he postulated that the female was Helena and the basilica the Holy Sepulcher, from which the relic of the holy nail was sent to Trier in a coffer of which the ivory formed a part; cf. *Le Trésor de Trèves* (Paris [1886]), 1f.

<sup>71</sup> On the propylon and access to the Holy Sepulcher, see S. Spain Alexander, "Studies in Constantinian Church Architecture. I," *RACr*, 67 (1971), 307–10, fig. 17; Coüasnon, *op. cit.*, 44–46, pls. viii, xv. On the Madaba pavement, see M. Avi-Yonah, *The Madaba Mosaic Map* (Jerusalem, 1954); A. Grabar, *The Golden Age of Justinian* (New York, 1967), fig. 117.

<sup>72</sup> Coüasnon, *op. cit.*, 12. The spatial telescoping on the Trier ivory, which permits the juxtaposition of the city gate and the colonnades of the *cardo maximus*, has its parallel in S. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, where the façade of Theodoric's palace abuts the city gate; see Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (note 15 *supra*), pl. 152. Note that both gates have figural decoration in the lunettes, thus establishing other precedents than the Chalke for the appearance of Christ on the city gate on the Trier ivory. Against the generally held notion that the gate on the ivory is the Chalke, see Mango, *loc. cit.* (note 8 *supra*). K. Holum and G. Vikan endorse the Chalke identification in a forthcoming study of the Trier ivory.

The identifications of the ivory's background structures are proposed quite tentatively, for further investigation into their models' appearances and pictorial traditions, if any, is necessary. It does seem unlikely, however, that these structures on the ivory represent the interiors of buildings, as has been proposed, for it is difficult to conceive of the depiction of the exteriors of buildings against a background of interiors.<sup>73</sup>

Turning now to the protagonists on the Translation of Relics ivory, we must consider whether it is possible that they represent Heraclius and Martina. At the time of the translation of the True Cross Heraclius was more than fifty years old; his blond hair had turned grey.<sup>74</sup> Georgius Cedrenus, writing in the eleventh century, provides the sole notice on Heraclius' beard: he reports that Heraclius had a beard prior to his accession but trimmed it in the imperial fashion to lessen the resemblance to Phocas.<sup>75</sup> In his portraits on coins and silver control stamps Heraclius is generally bearded. There are, however, numerous exceptions in which he appears with a very short beard or clean-shaven. For example, three silver plates in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection have a beardless portrait of Heraclius on their control stamps.<sup>76</sup> Some two dozen coin issues also portray Heraclius clean-shaven.<sup>77</sup> Most of the coins are from western mints, but two issues of semisses and one of the tremisses are from Constantinople, dating from 610–13(?) and 613(?)–41 (fig. 26).<sup>78</sup> These coins provide helpful testimony that a clean-shaven portrayal of Heraclius was current at the conclusion of the Persian War; in the third decade of his rule, a new portrait type was introduced in coinage in which Heraclius wears a long beard and long mustache.<sup>79</sup> If one seeks parallels in portraiture between coins and other media, such as ivories, then a silver coin from Carthage offers suggestive details in relation to the Trier ivory (fig. 27).<sup>80</sup> Dated 614–41, the coin presents on the obverse a beardless Heraclius wearing a crown with pendilia surmounted by a cross. On the reverse are two busts: at the left Heraclius Constantine in chlamys and crown with pendilia and cross, and at the right Martina, wearing a garment with a pearl-trimmed neckline and a crown with long pendilia and a cross. The types of Heraclius and Martina appearing on this coin correspond to the imperial couple on the Trier ivory.

Two further arguments may be advanced in support of my hypothesis that the clean-shaven emperor on the ivory is Heraclius; the first may be termed the provincial argument, the second the ideological. Provincial artists, whether die-cutters, ivory carvers, metalworkers, or miniature painters, did

<sup>73</sup> Mango, *op. cit.* (note 8 *supra*), 105.

<sup>74</sup> George of Pisidia, *Heraclius*, I.140f., ed. Pertusi, *Poemi*, 246, 267.

<sup>75</sup> Cedrenus, *Σύνοψις ἱστοριῶν*, ed. I. Bekker, I, Bonn ed. (1838), 714.

<sup>76</sup> Ross, *Catalogue* (note 13 *supra*), I, 21f., nos. 16.1–3, pl. xixf., providing a date of *ca.* 610; Dodd, *Stamps*, 150–55, nos. 44–46. The latter believes she sees a short beard on the imperial chin.

<sup>77</sup> Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II, 1, nos. 51f., 54, 232–34, 236–39, 244, 261f., 269, 274–76, 279–82, 312, pls. ix f., xix, xxif.

<sup>78</sup> Semisses: *ibid.*, no. 51f.; tremisses: no. 54.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 218; also Dodd, *Stamps*, 10.

<sup>80</sup> Grierson, *op. cit.*, no. 233; see also pp. 235, 349 and pl. xix.



not always follow their (metropolitan) models to the letter. A sense of autonomy, the influence of local tradition, and even misunderstanding contributed to the variety and vitality of Byzantine art produced outside Constantinople.<sup>81</sup> Hence, a Syro-Palestinian carver may have known beardless images of Heraclius, or beardless images of other emperors, or may have had as a model for his work a procession—an *adventus*—in which the emperor was clean-shaven.<sup>82</sup> More likely, however, is the influence of Byzantine imperial ideology in the choice of a clean-shaven, even youthful, portrayal of Heraclius. A clean-shaven face was, after all, common to most of Heraclius' sixth-century predecessors, at least part of the time. Anastasius, Justinian, Justin II, Tiberius, and Maurice were portrayed clean-shaven, as were the two great emperors of the fourth century, Constantine and Theodosius (figs. 3f., 8–10, 12f.).<sup>83</sup> It is also worth noting that, with the exception of Maurice, Heraclius was the first Byzantine emperor since Theodosius I actually to command his armies in battle; this fact, noted by Ostrogorsky, may have been known to Heraclius' contemporaries, with court art and propaganda making the most of the comparison.<sup>84</sup> But more important is the ideology of the emperor as the new Constantine. This was, of course, a traditional acclamation for the emperor, but it acquired new significance in Heraclius' case.<sup>85</sup> Documents, inscriptions, and the names of his sons testify to Heraclius' use of the Constantinian name and reputation.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps the most significant parallels in their lives were the wars fought under the sign of the cross—by Constantine against rival emperors and by Heraclius against the Persians—and their discoveries of the True Cross. George of Pisidia, cleric, poet, and encomiast, wrote a poem on the restoration of the Cross after having learned of Heraclius' plans to deliver it to Jerusalem. He called on Constantine the Great to praise Heraclius for the rediscovery. Heraclius became like Constantine for having found the Cross, and was fortified by it.<sup>87</sup> It is possible that in the actual translation ceremony the parallels between Heraclius and Constantine were exploited, and the clean-shaven appearance of Heraclius on the Trier ivory may reflect this association.

<sup>81</sup> On provincialism in coinage, see *ibid.*, 33; proposing Syrian copies of Constantinopolitan silver, see Dodd, *Silver Treasures* (note 52 *supra*), 34–46; and on the minor arts of a later period, see A. Banck, "Les Modèles de Constantinople et les copies locales," *Actes du XXII<sup>e</sup> Congrès Internationale d'Histoire de l'Art* (Budapest, 1969), 177–84.

<sup>82</sup> Wessel (*op. cit.* [note 4 *supra*], 14f.) finds the provincial argument useful for explaining the anomalous fibula and crown, doubting that a Constantinopolitan artist, particularly a court artist, would have failed to execute imperial insignia in their correct and current form.

<sup>83</sup> E.g., Constantine, coins and colossal portrait, in Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (note 15 *supra*), pls. 16f., 52; Theodosius, silver missorium, in *ibid.*, pl. 53; Anastasius, consular diptych, in *idem*, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, no. 21; Justinian, gold medallion, in *idem*, *Early Christian Art*, pl. 244; Justin II, cross, in Volbach and Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz*, pl. 69; Tiberius, coins, in Bellinger, *D.O. Coins*, I, pls. LX–LXV; Maurice, coins, in *ibid.*, pls. LXVI–LXXX. See also E. B. Harrison, "The Constantinian Portrait," *DOP*, 21 (1967), 79–96.

<sup>84</sup> Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.* (note 60 *supra*), 100. See, for example, Kitzinger's interpretation of the David plates, *op. cit.* (note 41 *supra*), 4–7; Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 235.

<sup>85</sup> O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell* (repr. Darmstadt, 1956), 129–35.

<sup>86</sup> In greater detail, see Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 225f.

<sup>87</sup> George of Pisidia, *In restitutionem S. Crucis*, ed. Pertusi, *Poemi*, 225–30, esp. 227, line 47–228, line 63; Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 226.

The central role of the empress in the Translation of Relics ivory can also be explained by the historical context of the return of the True Cross. If my identification of the event is correct, she is Martina, Heraclius' niece and second wife. Mother of nine or eleven of his children, Martina was Heraclius' constant companion. Their marriage was uncanonical, however, and had been discouraged by Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople. Bowing to Heraclius' pressure, Sergius wed the couple in 614, but ecclesiastical and popular criticism continued to plague them, even after their deaths; hence the remarks of Antiochus Strategos concerning the illegality of the union and the emperor's fear of rebuke by the high priests.<sup>88</sup> According to Lemerle, Heraclius' triumphant return of the reinvented Cross to Jerusalem may have been designed to counter that censure.<sup>89</sup> The prominent position of the empress on the Trier ivory may reflect Martina's role in the actual translation: the couple may have attempted to overcome condemnation by according Martina a key and public role on this historic occasion which the ivory documents. Heraclius and Martina are both cleansed, as it were, of their sin by contact with the Cross. Furthermore, Martina may have played, both in the translation and on the ivory, the role of the new Helena. Constantine's mother had journeyed to the Holy Land to visit the *loca sancta*. According to Ambrose, she was in Jerusalem while the Holy Sepulcher area was being cleared for construction. There she witnessed the discovery of wooden fragments which she proved to be relics of the True Cross.<sup>90</sup> In Constantinople, Constantine honored his mother by erecting her statue in the Augusteon, a square that was named after her.<sup>91</sup> An eighth-century guidebook to Constantinople, the *παραστάσεις σύντομοι χρονικά*, records that in the vaulting of the Milion Constantine and Helena were depicted holding a cross between them.<sup>92</sup> I suggest that the attribute of the empress on the Trier ivory not only reflects the contemporary practice as witnessed in coinage<sup>93</sup> but also is intended to recall Helena, who discovered the True Cross on the very spot where Martina stands. Martina may thus be seen as the new Helena, partner to Heraclius, the new Constantine.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>88</sup> On the patriarch's objection to the marriage, see V. Grumel, *Les Regestes des Actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, I, fasc. 1. *Les Regestes de 381 à 715* (Paris, 1932), 114, no. 284; J. L. van Dieten, *Geschichte der griechischen Patriarchen von Konstantinopel*, IV. *Geschichte der Patriarchen von Sergios I. bis Johannes VI. (610–715)*, Enzyklopädie der Byzantinistik, XXIV (Amsterdam, 1972), 5f. On Heraclius' offspring, see Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 230; van Dieten, *op. cit.*, 2–6; Grierson, *D.O. Coins*, II, 1, 216; II, 2, 385f., 389f.; V. Grumel, *Traité des études byzantines*, I. *La Chronologie* (Paris, 1958), 362; A. Pernice, *L'Imperatore Eraclio. Saggio di Storia Bizantina* (Florence, 1905), 293f.; A. N. Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, trans. M. Ogilvie-Grant, I (Amsterdam, 1968), 94–96, 358.

<sup>89</sup> "... en se purifiant en quelque sorte à leurs yeux de son mariage incestueux, dans l'éclat d'une cérémonie extraordinaire qu'il présida avec Martine, et qui montrait à tous sans contestation possible que le Ciel avait été avec lui": Lemerle, *op. cit.* (note 56 *supra*), 352f.; Frolov, "Vraie Croix," 101–5; and *idem*, "La Déviation de la 4<sup>e</sup> croisade vers Constantinople. Note additionnelle: La Croisade et les guerres persanes d'Héraclius," *RHR*, 147 (1955), 50–61.

<sup>90</sup> S.v. "Helena," *RE*, VII, cols. 2820–22; Ambrose, *De Obitu Theodosii*, PL, 16, cols. 1462–66.

<sup>91</sup> *Chronicon Paschale*, I, ed. Dindorf (note 6 *supra*), 529.

<sup>92</sup> Ἀνωθεν τῆς Χαλκῆς ἐν τῷ Μιλίῳ τῷ πρὸς ἀνατολὴν Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Ἑλένης ἀνωθεν τῆς καμάρας. ἐνθα καὶ σταυρὸς (καὶ ἡ τύχη) μέσον τοῦ σταυροῦ τῆς πόλεως, in T. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, I, Teubner (1901), 38. See also Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, II.29, *ibid.*, II, 166.

<sup>93</sup> See *supra*, p. 285.

<sup>94</sup> O. Wulff suggested that the imperial couple on the ivory were Constantine and Helena and the ocale Constantinople, in *Altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst*, I. *Die altchristliche Kunst*, Handbuch

Extrapolating from what we know of Byzantine imperial ideology, Heraclius' rule, his restoration of the Cross, and the principles of Byzantine art, particularly imperial art, I believe it is possible to decipher the iconography of the Trier ivory and to identify the imperial pair as Heraclius and Martina.

As for the reliquary of the True Cross, Byzantine sources document only that it was returned with its seals intact.<sup>95</sup> The shape of the reliquary is not known. Egeria, who made her pilgrimage in the late fourth or early fifth century, described the coffer she saw as *loculus argenteus deauratus, in quo est lignum sanctum crucis, aperitur et profertur, ponitur in mensa tam lignum crucis quam titulus*.<sup>96</sup> George of Pisidia, writing at the time of the Return of the Cross, drew comparisons between the Cross and the ark of the covenant. The most sacred objects of Christianity and Judaism, symbols of divine presence, each possessed miraculous powers, demonstrated, for example, against the enemies of their faiths.<sup>97</sup> Taking these factors into consideration, and against the background of the Judeo-Christian tradition, it may well be that the True Cross was housed in a reliquary that had the same shape as the ark of the covenant. The house-shaped reliquary on the knees of the bishops on the Trier ivory is, in fact, the same shape as the ark of the covenant as it appears in the Joshua Roll, a tenth-century manuscript.<sup>98</sup> But depictions of the ark of the covenant were not consistent; even in Early Christian and Byzantine art there are at least two other distinct forms. To my knowledge, there was no pictorial tradition for the primary reliquary of the True Cross, and secondary reliquaries of the Cross are numerous and diverse in form.<sup>99</sup>

der Kunstwissenschaft (Berlin, 1918), 194f.; and *idem*, "Ein Gang durch die Geschichte der altchristlichen Kunst mit ihren neuen Pfadfindern," *RepKunstw*, 35 (1912), 235, note 130.

<sup>95</sup> See *supra*, p. 294 and note 59; also Nicephorus, *Opuscula Historica*, ed. C. de Boor, Teubner (1880), 22; on the question of the sealed casket, cf. Frolow, "Vraie Croix," 96-99.

<sup>96</sup> *Itinerarium*, 37, ed. Pétré (note 69 *supra*), 234.

<sup>97</sup> George of Pisidia, *In restit. S. Crucis*, 73-81, ed. Pertusi, *Poemi*, 228f.; Antiochus Strategos, ed Conybeare (note 59 *supra*), 516, and above; also Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 227 and note 52. On the ark, see R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, II. *Religious Institutions* (New York, 1965), 297-302 (English translation of *Les Institutions de l'ancien testament* [Paris, 1958-60]).

<sup>98</sup> Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Palat. gr. 431, sheets II, V, in K. Weitzmann, *The Joshua Roll* (Princeton, 1948), pls. II.5, v.16. Note, however, that the ark rests on a slab as it does, for example, in several Octateuchs, e.g., Mt. Athos, Vatopedi 602, fols. 344v, 345v, 351r; Vatican, cods. gr. 746, fol. 443v, and gr. 747, fols. 218r, 219r, 220r; Weitzmann, *ibid.*, pls. II-v. See also the fresco of the Bearing of the Ark of the Covenant in the parecclesion of the Kariye Djami: P. A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, III (New York, 1966), pls. 453-56, no. 231.

<sup>99</sup> There are two basic types of the ark. The first has a "lean-to" roof-like form, as in panels in the nave of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, in H. Karpp, *Die frühchristlichen und mittelalterlichen Mosaiken in Santa Maria Maggiore zu Rom* (Baden-Baden, 1966), pls. 125, 138; the Ashburnam Pentateuch, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 2334, fol. 76r, in O. von Gebhardt, *The Miniatures of the Ashburnam Pentateuch* (London, 1883), pl. 18; apse mosaic, Germigny-des-Prés, in P. Bloch, "Das Apsismosaik von Germigny-des-Prés. Karl der Grosse und der alte Bund," in *Karl der Grosse*, III. *Karolingische Kunst*, ed. W. Braunsfels and H. Schnitzler (Düsseldorf, 1965), 234-61. The second type of ark has a rounded top, as in at least two MSS of Cosmas Indicopleustes, e.g., Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. IX.28, fol. 113r, in W. Wolska-Conus, *Cosmas Indicopleustes. Topographie Chrétienne*, I (= SC, 141) (Paris, 1968), 196; Mt. Sinai, MS 1186, fols. 82r, 86v, 89r, in *ibid.*, I, 195, and II (= SC, 159) (1970), 65; and *idem*, *La Topographie chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustes. Théologie et science au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Bibliothèque byzantine, Études, III (Paris, 1962), pl. 5; see also the Count Leo Bible, Vatican, cod. reg. gr. 1, fol. 85v, in V. Lazarev, *Storia della Pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), pl. 111. For further discussion, see Bloch, *op. cit.*, 239-44; M. Vieillard-Troiekouroff, "Nouvelles Etudes sur les mosaïques de Germigny-des-Prés," *CahArch*, 17 (1967), 103-12, esp. 106. For a study of reliquaries of the Cross, cf. A. Frolow, *Les Reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, AOC, VIII (Paris, 1965).

On the Trier ivory the two ecclesiastics who hold the reliquary on their knees are identifiable by their vestments—the tunic, chasuble, and omophorion—as bishops. The sources, however, do not mention which bishops participated in the translation of the True Cross in 630. One may well have been Modestus, who was elevated to the patriarchate of Jerusalem later on the same day.<sup>100</sup> The second figure might have been a bishop of the see of Jerusalem or Antioch who would have joined the imperial procession as it made its way from Hierapolis, where the True Cross was surrendered to the Byzantines, through Berrhoe, Emesa, Damascus, and Tiberias to Jerusalem.<sup>101</sup>

To summarize: on the basis of an analysis of previously neglected iconographical details, I have suggested that the Trier ivory can be dated no earlier than the last third of the sixth century. Stylistic comparisons challenge the generally held view that the ivory is Constantinopolitan, for although certain features of the ivory have parallels in Constantinopolitan ivory carving, the basic figure type has its closest analogies in works of Syro-Palestinian origin, particularly in works dating to the last decades of the sixth and the early seventh centuries. A fundamental characteristic of Syro-Palestinian art is the role of place—sacred place, *loca sancta*—as a vital ingredient in the content of a religious image. This quality informs the Trier ivory, for the precisely detailed architectural setting, which nearly dominates the figures, does in the end provide evidence for the identification of the translation commemorated on the ivory. The basilica and the rotunda can only be the Holy Sepulcher and the Anastasis, for they are portrayed on the ivory as they were previously in Early Christian art, and as the rotunda was to be portrayed later in Carolingian art. In the Early Byzantine period there was a single occasion on which an emperor visited Jerusalem and participated in a translation of relics; that was in March 630, when Heraclius brought back to Jerusalem the reliquary containing the True Cross following the Byzantine victory over the Persians. This event, I have suggested, is the subject of the Trier ivory. If these hypotheses are correct, then the ivory, carved by a Syro-Palestinian artist, can be dated within a few years of the event itself, for the Islamic conquest of Byzantine Syro-Palestine was to be soon and swift. Damascus was occupied in September 635; within a year most of Syria was under Islamic control, and in 638 Jerusalem was taken and the True Cross removed to Constantinople.<sup>102</sup> The ivory can, therefore, be dated between 630 and 638.

With the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem by Heraclius in 630 the Persian War was brought to conclusion. The Cross, under whose sign the armies of Heraclius had fought, brought victory to the Byzantines. Heraclius,

<sup>100</sup> Antiochus Strategos, ed. Conybeare, 516; also, Pertusi, *Poemi*, 231 f.; and Eutychius, *Annales*, PG, 111, col. 1091.

<sup>101</sup> On the route taken, see Pertusi, *Poemi*, 234.

<sup>102</sup> On the conquest of Syro-Palestine by the Arabs, see L. Veccia Vaglieri, "The Patriarchal and Umayyad Caliphates," ed. P. M. Holt, A. K. S. Lambton, B. Lewis, *The Cambridge History of Islam*, I (Cambridge, 1970), 62. For a report on the saving of the Cross, see Sebêos, ed. Macler (note 60 *supra*), 91.

in turn, recovered the True Cross from its humiliating captivity and restored it to its proper place in Jerusalem.<sup>103</sup> The ivory celebrates the Cross and emperor alike, for the one by the power of the other conquered the enemy of his people and of his God.<sup>104</sup> The ivory also celebrates Heraclius apart from the Cross. It records his presence in Jerusalem as the first reigning emperor to visit the Holy City and the Holy Land. By entering Jerusalem, Heraclius becomes like the Old Testament king and prophet David, who brought the sacred ark of the covenant to the village that was to become the capital of his kingdom and to be known by his name. Heraclius enters the city of David with the Cross of the son of David as the new David.<sup>105</sup> His victorious presence in Jerusalem also recalls that of Christ, the source of Byzantine imperial authority, who, having entered Jerusalem for the last time, triumphed over death on the Cross. Furthermore, Heraclius' presence gives physical expression, in a sense, to an official act of the previous year: in 629 Heraclius adopted as his official title the formula πιστὸς ἐν Χριστῷ βασιλεὺς, thus epitomizing his belief in the Davidic heritage of the Byzantine imperial office as well as the sovereignty of Christ.<sup>106</sup> Whereas these aspects of imperial ideology are implicit in the ivory's documentation of Heraclius' journey to Jerusalem, an explicit aspect, as we have seen, is Heraclius as the new Constantine. In having fought an enemy under the sign of the Cross, in victory, in reinventing the Cross, Heraclius acted out and earned the traditional epithet of the emperor as the new Constantine. I have suggested that the beardless portrayal of the emperor on the ivory may, in part, reflect the influence of Constantinian portraiture. Furthermore, the Empress Martina, who plays a prominent role on the ivory, stands as the new Helena, pious partner to her spouse, the new Constantine.

The Trier ivory is generally assumed to be the remaining panel of a long-lost ivory chest.<sup>107</sup> Possibly the chest was a reliquary for a fragment of the True Cross. We know that Heraclius distributed fragments after having regained possession of the Cross from the Persians.<sup>108</sup> What more fitting way to send forth some of these fragments than in an ivory chest on which were depicted key events in the history of the Cross? Thus, one can imagine that other faces of the reliquary may have depicted the Crucifixion; or the Cross on Golgotha; or a Cross between cypresses symbolizing victory over death, paradise, and salvation; or the Cross in Byzantine history, as, for example, Constantine's vision of the Cross, the battle at the Milvian Bridge, the Invention of the True Cross by Helena, or Constantine and Helena with the Cross.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>103</sup> For the Persian insults to the captive Cross, see the report of Antiochus Strategos, ed. Conybeare, 516; for the verbal insults of Chosroes, see Sebēos, ed. Macler, 70f.; and Theophanes, ed. de Boor, 301.

<sup>104</sup> On the religious nature of the war, see Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 219–25 and *passim*.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 233, and for Heraclius as the new David, 227–37.

<sup>106</sup> For a study of the implications of the new title, see I. Shahid, "The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the Reign of Heraclius," *DOP*, 26 (1972), 293–320; and Spain Alexander, "Heraclius," 232f., 234.

<sup>107</sup> Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten*, 70.

<sup>108</sup> Frolow, "Vraie Croix," 99.

<sup>109</sup> The earliest extant cycle of True Cross images is preserved in MS Paris gr. 510, fol. 440r; for a brief analysis, see S. Der Nersessian, "The Illustrations of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus:

In such a way the entire reliquary would have made explicit the references implicit in the surviving panel and would have epitomized the significance of the relic contained within for the Empire it protected. Moreover, it would have accorded to Heraclius, πιστός ἐν Χριστῷ βασιλεύς, the last word—to date—in the history of the True Cross. In conclusion, a passage from the Liturgy of the Exaltation of the Cross by Anatolios, a seventh-century hymnographer,<sup>110</sup> may be read as a commentary on the Translation of Relics ivory, particularly if one reads Heraclius and Martina for [Constantine] and Helena:

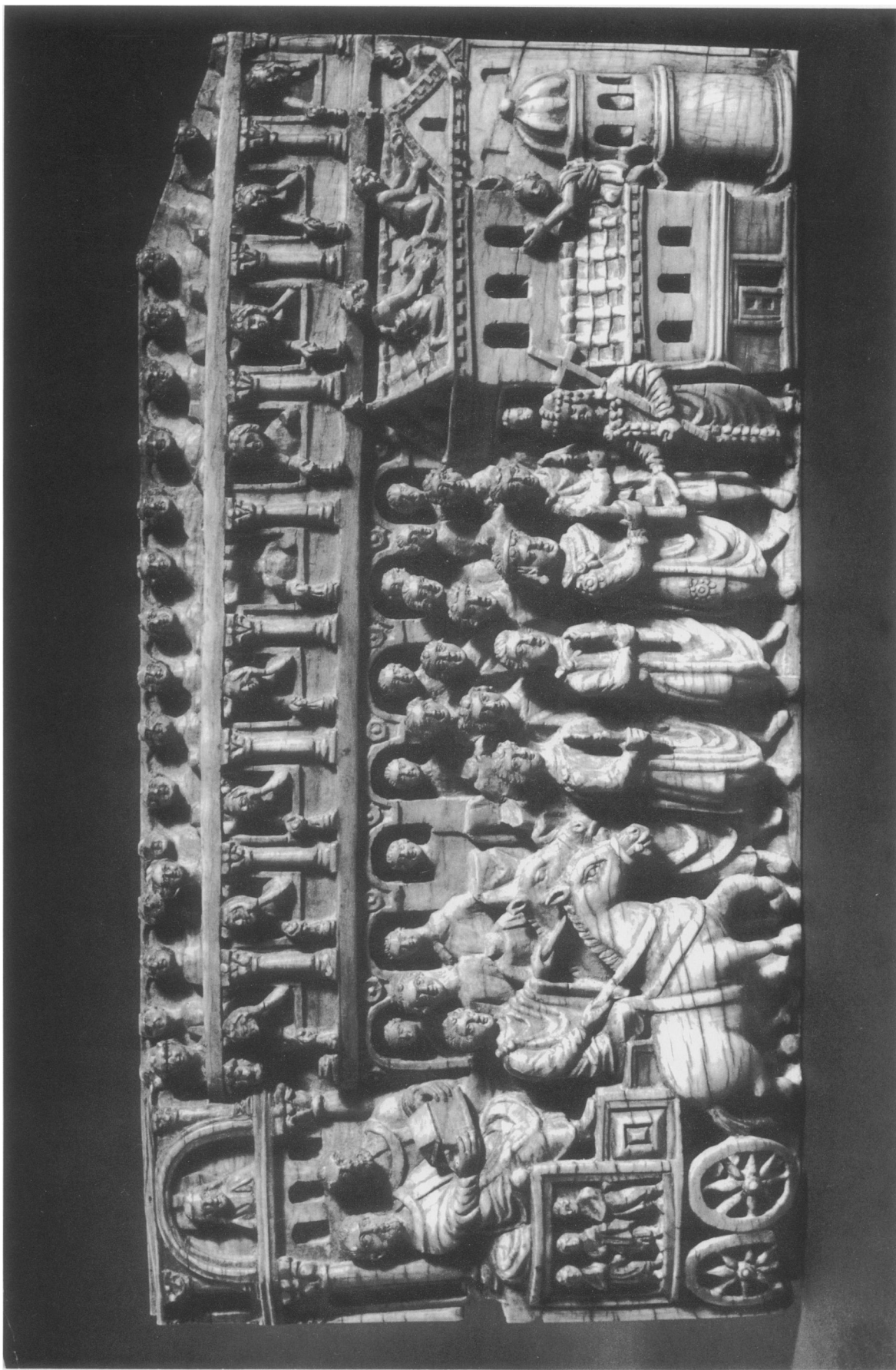
O Cross, sign radiant with light among the stars, thou hast in prophecy revealed a trophy of victory to the godly King; and when his mother Helena found thee, she displayed thee in the sight of all the world. And today the choirs of the faithful shout aloud as they raise thee up on high: Enlighten us by thy brightness, O life-giving and all-venerable Cross: make us holy by thy might, and lifted on high before the battle line, strengthen us through thine Exaltation.<sup>111</sup>

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Paris Gr. 510. A Study of the Connections between Text and Image," *DOP*, 16 (1962), 219–21, fig. 15. Miss Der Nersessian does not postulate any pre iconoclastic sources for the miniatures, but she notes the reference to the one sure pre iconoclastic cycle of events in the life of Constantine in the capital, sponsored by Juliana Anicia at Hagios Polyuktos; cf. *The Palatine Anthology*, ed. W. R. Paton, Loeb (London-New York, 1927), I, 11. For other images of Constantine in the capital, see A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), s.v. Constantin I and Hélène. In the Latin West, the historical decoration of Charlemagne's palace at Ingelheim included Constantine's founding of his new capital; Ermoldus Nigellus, *In Honorem Hludowici*, IV.183–283, esp. v. 270f., ed E. Duemmler, MGH, *Poetae*, II (Berlin, 1884), 63–66; trans. C. Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art. 300–1150*, ed. H. W. Janson, Sources and Documents in the History of Art (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971), 84–88.

<sup>110</sup> H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, XII.2.1 (Munich, 1959), 472.

<sup>111</sup> *The Festal Menaion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware, The Service Books of the Orthodox Church (London, 1969), 139. For a second contemporary celebration of the Return of the True Cross, see Sophronius, *Anacreontica*, PG, 87,3, cols. 3805–12.



1. Trier, Cathedral Treasury. Ivory, The Translation of Relics





2. Justinian, no. 37e.2



4a. Maurice, no. 149



4b. Enlarged



3. Tiberius II, no. 13a.2



5a. Heraclius, no. 13e.2



5b. Enlarged



7. Justin II, no. 125a.1



6a. Constans II, no. 22c



6b. Enlarged





8. Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia. Silver Missorium of Theodosius I



9. London, British Museum. Medallion of Justinian, Cast



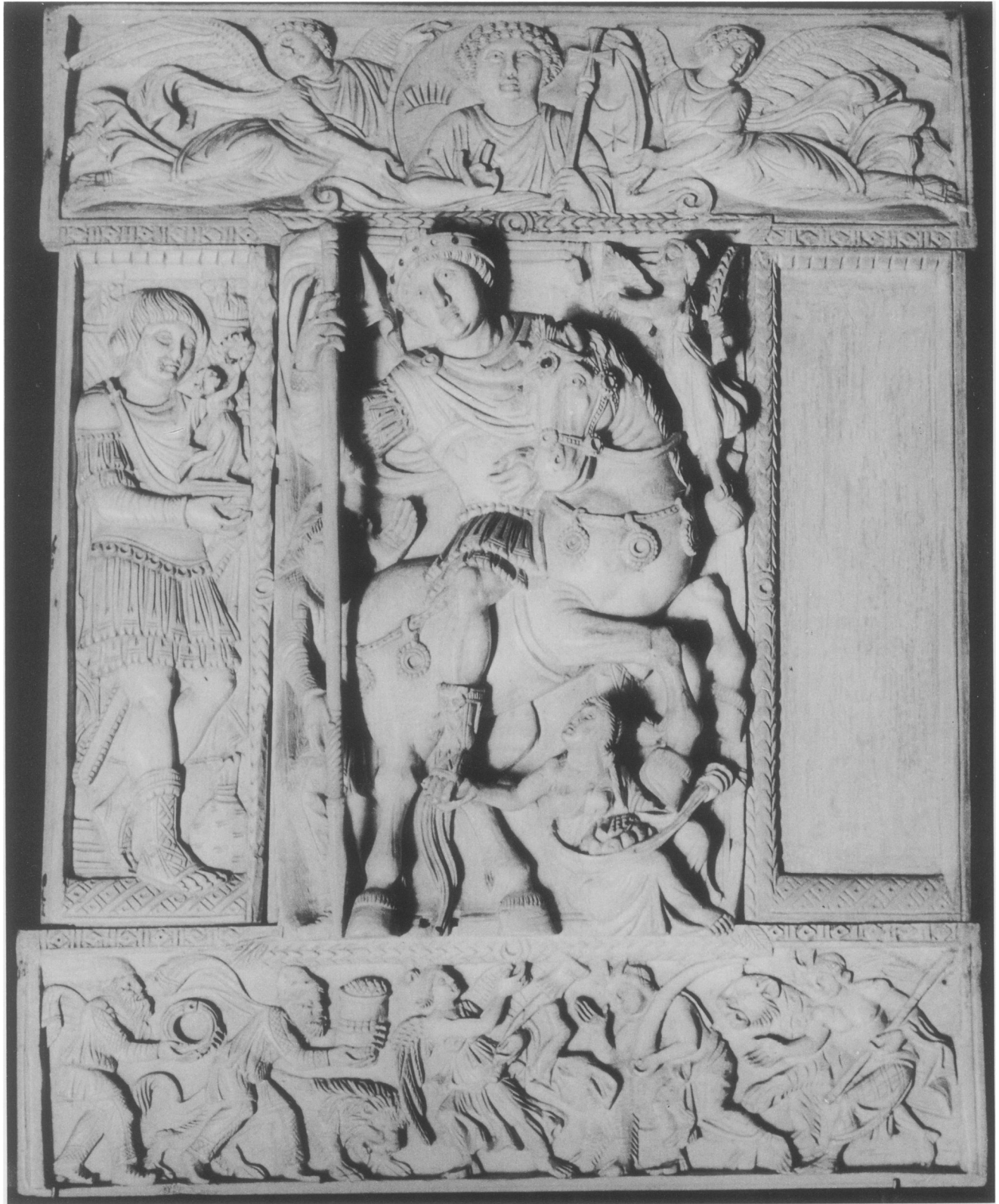
10. Rome, Treasury of St. Peter's. Silver Cross of Justin II



11. London, British Museum. Silver Censer

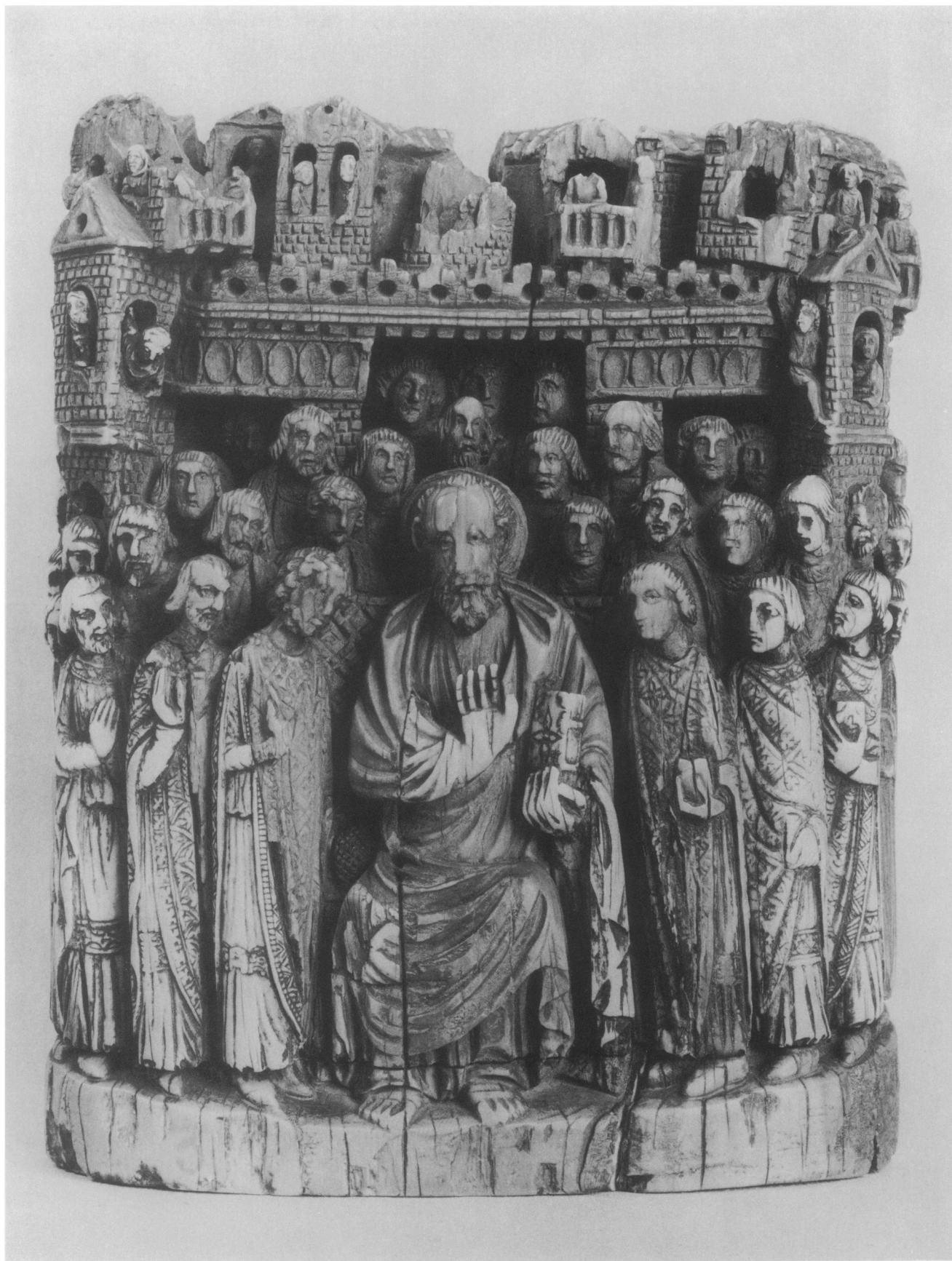


12. Florence, Museo Nazionale. Ivory, Ariadne



13. Paris, Louvre. Ivory, "Barberini" Diptych

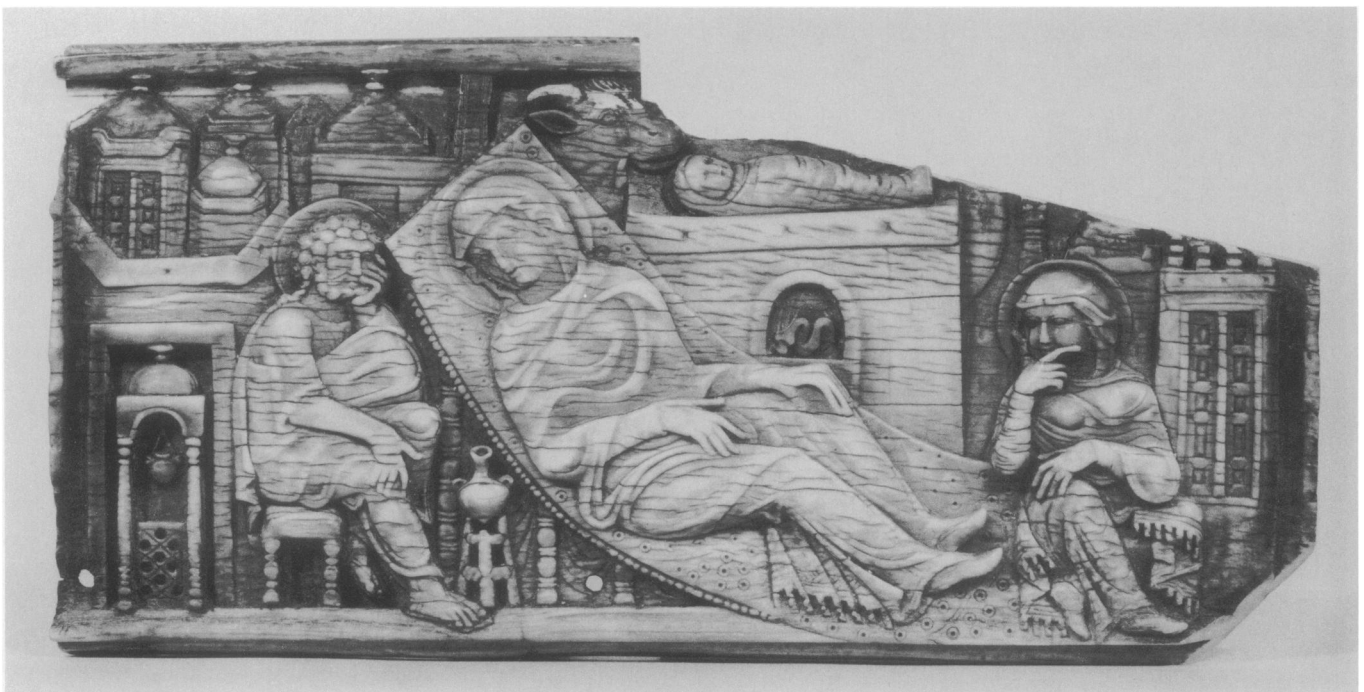




14. Paris, Louvre. Ivory, St. Mark Enthroned Amidst his Successors



15. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. Ivory Pyxis, detail, The Sacrifice of Isaac



16. Dumbarton Oaks Collection. Ivory, The Nativity



17. Paris, Bibl. Nat., suppl. gr. 1286, fol. 10v, detail, Herod's Banquet



18. Florence, Bibl. Laur., Plut. I.56, fol. 13v, The Ascension





19. Rome, Vatican Museum. Sancta Sanctorum Reliquary, Lid



20. Mt. Sinai, Monastery. Icon, The Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace

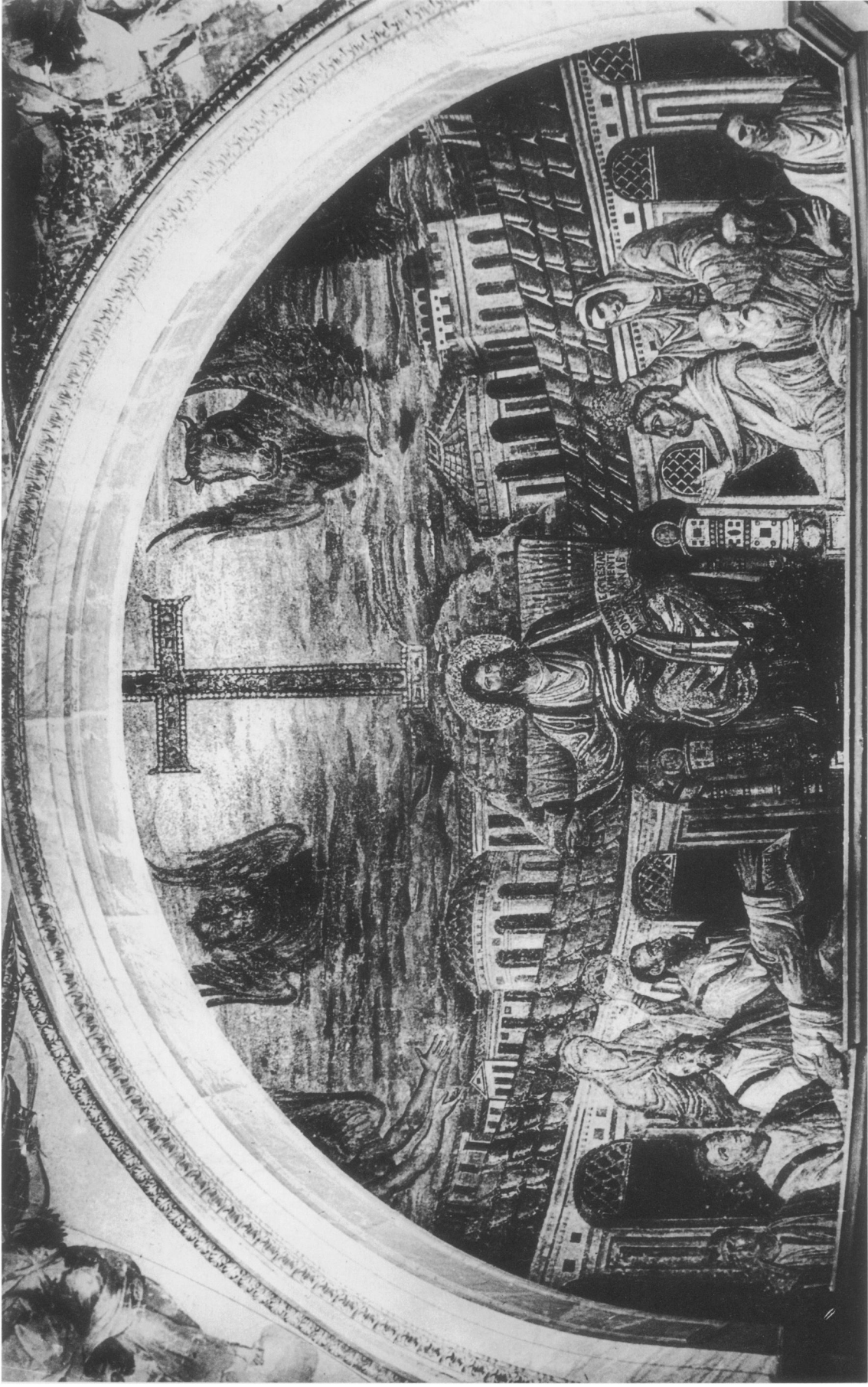




21. New York, Metropolitan Museum. Silver Plaque, St. Peter



22. Dumbarton Oaks Collection. Bronze Plaque, Saint or Apostle



23. Rome, S. Pudenziana. Apse Mosaic, Christ Enthroned in the Heavenly Jerusalem

VENI A REGNUM TUUM.  
FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA

DIE ET DIMITE NOBIS  
DEBITA NOSTRA

CAS IN TEMPTATIONEM  
SIDI LIBER A NOS A MALO



INCIPIT VOX BOLE  
CREDO IN DEUM PA

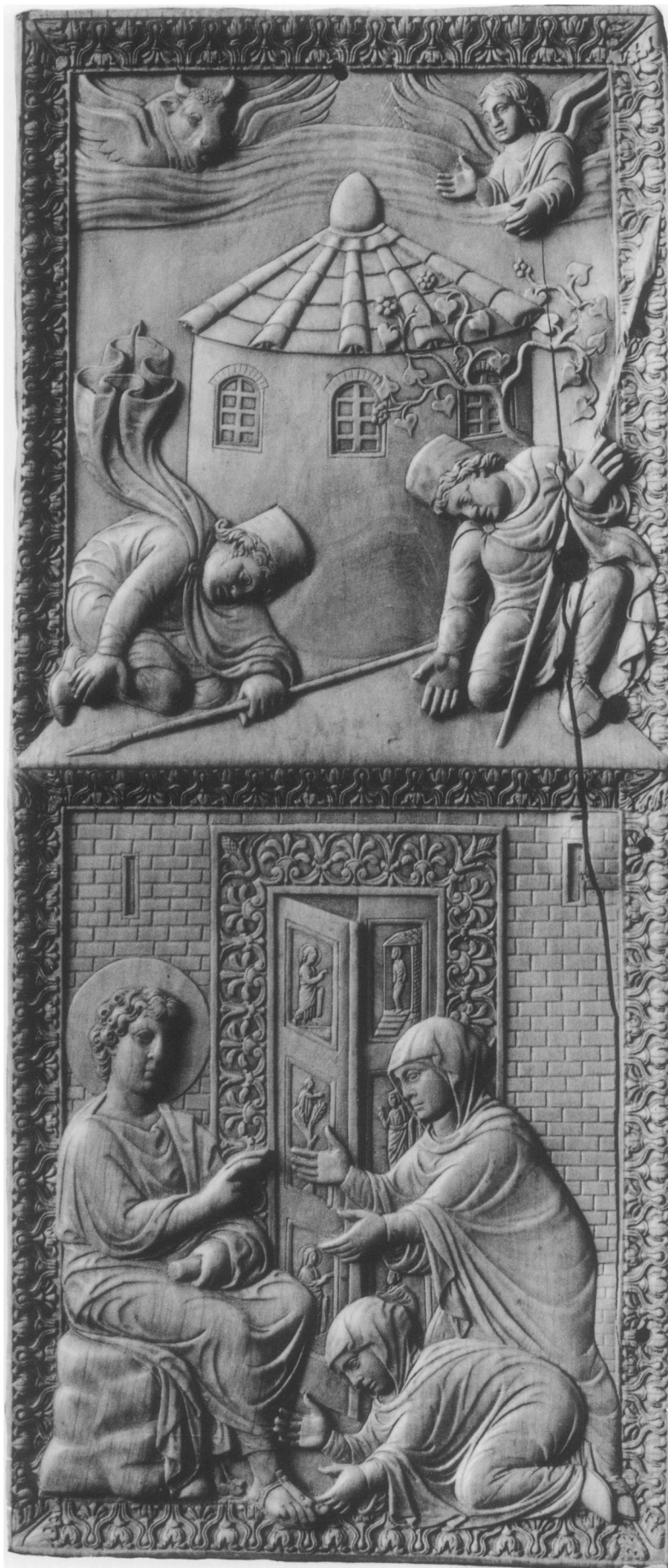
TREREM OMNIPOTENTEM  
CREATOR CAELI ET TERRAE  
ET IN IHESUM FILIUM MEUM  
UNICUM DOMINUM NOSTRUM  
QUI CONCEPITUS EST DE SPIRITU  
SANCTO NATUS EX MARIA VIRGINE

APOSTOLORUM

QUI PRO NOBIS PASSUS EST UT  
NOBIS CRUCIFIXUS  
MORTUUS ET SEPULTUS  
DESCENDIT AD INFERNA  
TERRA  
ET ADIUVANS NOS  
ASCENDIT AD CAELUM  
SEDET AD DEXTERAM PATRIS

QUI OMNIPOTENS IN  
DEUS  
QUI VIVIT ET REGNAT  
CUM PATRE ET SPIRITU  
SANCTO  
AMEN  
ECCLESIA CATHOLICA  
SCORUM COMMUNIO  
NEM REMISSIONEM

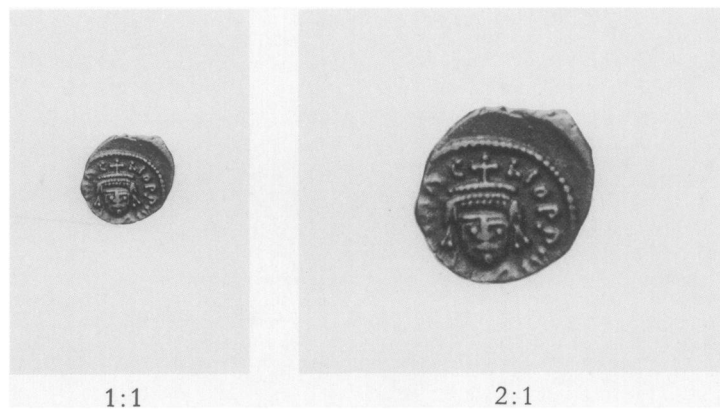




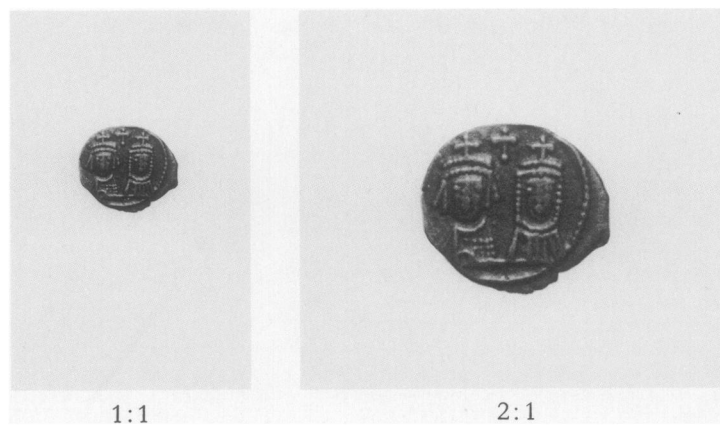
25. Milan, Museo del Castello Sforzesco. Ivory,  
The Three Marys at the Tomb



26. Heraclius, no. 52a.1, Obverse



27a. Heraclius, no. 233.5, Obverse



27b. Heraclius, no. 233.5, Reverse